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AN AGNOSTIC'S PROGRESS

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BY

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LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1906

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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS book is based upon two articles of mine which appeared under the same title in the *Contemporary Review*. The story of my progress as it was told in the articles is interrupted in the book by comments made in the light of present-day knowledge. I believe I have done well to interrupt it; I am sure that the later stages of a life go far to explain the earlier—and, besides, my aim is not literary, but friendly.

For me, the summing-up of the intellectual puzzle of life is that a reasonable and persevering man may open many locks with two keys. I label them for short, "Evolution and Organic Unity," and "The City which hath Foundations." They are very much alike; but the first is of the iron of science and philosophy, and the other (which I have found a master key) is gold. Nearly the whole of the new matter in my book is concerned with the filing and using of these keys; or, to drop metaphor, with my discovery and application of certain facts and principles which their labels represent.

W. S. P.

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I

I BEGAN my life, and for too many years lived it after a fashion, in the social borderland which lies between the Philistines and the Barbarians. For the body it is a sufficiently healthy place, but for the mind it has perils, perils of all the *idola*, and especially of the *idola* of the tribe and the den. I found even more difficulty in leaving its Boeotian air than in living in it ; and but for certain events that may be called accidents I might be there now. Happily there came a time—it was in the early sixties—when, like Christian, I was stirred up to flee from my City of Destruction ; and then, like Christian, burdened as I was, I fled. I, too, had found a book ; it was “The Origin of Species.” For me, as for him, the face of the world was changed. The book showed me at once and for ever a new thing. I might say now that it began the substitution of a dynamical for a statical conception of all life and worlds that are and are to be, a new conception which has illuminated all problems for me ever since ; I could not possibly have said so then. Vaguely I felt that earth shook under

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my feet. The world was in flux, and come of transformation. I had come of it, all my kind had come of it ; they and I might even have been differently transformed. We might, for example, have become like my newly recognised cousins, who still kept their ancestral arboreal habits and pointed ears—*my* ancestral habits, *my* ancestral ears. What did it all mean ? How, whence, whither ? 'And what, above all, had the "Origin" to say to my *idola* ? I remember now that these details concerning my ancestry were obtained from the "Descent," and that they came to me a little later than my first impression ; but in this respect chronology is of no importance. The impression was made, and the Grand Desire had laid hold upon me, the desire to seek out, to discover things, within a new world that was shaking, but alive. It was the beginning of the unfolding of my soul.

So I left the borderland—as to my inner life—and set out, a burdened and very lonely pilgrim, an explorer unequipped save with enthusiasm, unexhausted powers, and ignorance, which looks to me now pathetic, of the difficulties and dangers of the way. I was still young, still reticent with the reticence of youth, so I never spoke of my spurred desire nor of that which pressed it on. This was probably a good thing ; the book might have lost some of its magic under the rays of the border lamps. I remember, however, that the *Times* review of the "Descent" which was written by an influential "ignorant wind-bag," as Darwin called him, affected me only as a picture of stupidity, the stupidity of falsely learned incompetence. I had "seen a shining

star"; no *Times* reviewer could trick me into believing that it was a will-o'-th'-wisp. So I might not have been hurt if I had confided in my friends, although assuredly I should have hurt them. They, like Disraeli, were on the side of the angels in this matter.

It is difficult to believe my memory of the magnitude of the change. The Darwinian hypothesis and the evolutionary principle behind it have passed through the three stages so well stated by Agassiz. The whole world first declared both to be false; then it said they were contrary to religion; and now it is sure that it has known them all along. The men of this generation apparently imbibe a dynamical conception of the universe with their mothers' milk, at least as far as Darwin carried it. My tale sounds to me almost a fairy tale of transformation. It seems nearly incredible that even in my borderland men could have been so positively assured of an unquestionable world, *totus teres atque rotundus*, rounded off and simply *there*; but there is ample evidence of the fact, and a fairly adequate explanation of it as well. Here I must content myself with saying that if I did not know it as a part of my own experience I should not easily imagine it; and I must return to the subject of myself.

My retrospective journal will speak most cogently, at least to me, if I single out one by one certain landmarks of my history, each "shining star" as it came to lead me, or to show me where I had arrived at the moment of its uprising. I remember many of my stars, or rather I never forget them. I have only to

turn my eyes towards the Shadowy Companion who is my inner, demanding, growing self, to see them standing out as his opportunities and his pegs of reminder. Shining stars of this kind are the instruments and occasions of our Shadowy Companions ; their rays pierce the penumbral shade wherein much of every man of us, as we are now, must always dwell. The men who have no shining stars, the men for whom no Epiphany feast has its appropriateness, may well remain unacquainted with their Shadowy Companions, their greater selves, who should be known as selves that may endure. I, at least, have found that as star after star has come to me with a revelation of new light my Shadowy Companion has been the more made known, and made to be the more certainly myself—my lasting self—or so it seems to me.

My stars are mine alone ; they have my meaning only for me, for others they may well be foolishness. There is a star-sermon preached some eighteen centuries before I heard it, preached on Mars' Hill to the men of Athens ; there is a collection of scrawled pictures and diagrams (published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*) ; there is a wretched, paralysed, scalded cat which I drowned in an area in St. James's Square ; there is Darwin's "Origin," with several other books ; and there is one face—a woman's. All these are among my stars, all mark for me epochs in my mental history. In this *Journal Intime* one or another may or may not find a fuller record ; but their fullest and indelible record is myself.

The Athenian sermon reached me across the ages and through the mists of familiarity about the time when I learnt from Darwin that all things living in the world had come of change. Religion as a personal matter, religion as a life, did not exist for me or for my family. The borderland of my native village went to church at eleven o'clock on fine Sundays, and I went in and with it. There were unlucky Sundays when the Litany was said, and the service prolonged by its unmeaning length ; the lucky Sundays were wet ones that cleared up later. I knew most of the rector's sermons, and I noticed none except one which he preached (when I was about nineteen years of age) in consequence of the publication of the "Origin." I noticed this because he assured me that the geological fossils had been made and set in place by Almighty God for the better trial of faith in the cosmogony of Genesis, and the chronology of Archbishop Ussher ; and it is probable, I think, that by his attack upon it he sent me to read the book. I was a heathen, but unhappily devoid of even fetichism or pantheism, either of which may make of the other heathen a religious man. I did not know that there was any vital meaning in religion ; and wherever I went I carried with me my home-possessions, my home-habits, my home-blindness.

I was for the first time in my life really interested in the subject on a certain Sunday when I took refuge from the rector with St. Paul ; and that interest was merely critical and exploratory. I said to myself afterwards—but to no one else—that if any man were to preach that Athenian sermon as it stood; or (to

avoid the slippery ease with which familiar words glide over us), as it might be paraphrased, he would be taken for a heretic. Of course it will probably be obvious to my modern-minded reader, as it is to myself now, that in this naïve comment I almost plumbed the amazing depths of my amazing ignorance. The fact remains that because my standard of orthodoxy was a mere matter of the pulpits of the day I was not far wrong ; and I was certainly well justified by my personal experience. I was as ignorant of the meaning of the Christian faith as any educated Englishman was in the sixties or is at the present date. I knew nothing of a Divine Humanity, of an extending incarnation by which the world moves towards the fulfilment of an eternal purposive idea ; in fact, of any dynamical conception, true or false, about religion. Statical conceptions ruled my ignorance in this matter as they had ruled me everywhere else ; and I had yet to find my Darwin there. But the biological Darwin had played his part in arousing in me an interest in St. Paul, and I came home from church that day convinced that this subject of religion had something to do with the other subject of the developing life-world ; and that the discrepancy between St. Paul and the rector might bear on the problem of the book which had set me on my pilgrim way.

A great-uncle of mine had silently embraced the religion which is said to be that of all sensible men. My father inherited his library and did not inquire into its contents. I found "Colenso," "Essays and Reviews," and the like ; and with this poor food

I began to meet my new appetite for knowledge. Later I obtained from the London Library, where *tout vient à qui sait attendre*, other books of the same class, and some better ones. I read everything I could lay my hands on, and I came out after several years of this theological and anti-theological exploration a fairly reasonable agnostic, in the popular sense of the term.

There is no doubt in my mind that I was justified ; I was, in fact, following the light I saw. The condition of these things in my borderland life was so bad that in emerging into such agnosticism from a conventional attendance at church, a conventional saying of prayers, a conventional acquiescence in an externally deposited and irrational revelation, I left a deeper darkness behind me. The professed religion I knew of in my young days was no more a real religion than is any other pursuit or profession of a country gentleman. It was honest enough, as honest as hunting and shooting (although less ardently followed) ; it was vigorously if not wisely defended against attack, but neither more vigorously nor less foolishly than the Conservative cause, nor for any deeper reason. It was not unlike that religion of which Lord Palmerston held himself a supporter, when he complained of another kind which had intruded into private life. At first my agnosticism was of course no more religious than this ; but at least it was no less so ; and its quality, intellectually at least, if not morally, was far higher. It was capable, too, of passing over, as it did, into a state permeated with a real religious spirit. I do not say

that my part of the borderland had no religion ; assuredly it had one, and, in a way, a childish way, its religion was valuable ; but I say that the matter of church-going, and the received crudities of an amateur theology, had no necessary connection with it. The real live religion I saw around me was based on tradition, and was very good of its kind, but almost savage. If it had a code, the code was that of honour. The rest was convention. There was credulity, as long as familiar lines were observed in the demands upon belief, as, for example, in the sermon concerning fossils ; there was incredulity before the most reasonable suggestion that overpassed those lines. The real religion and the code of honour forbade open-mindedness where it seemed to be unfaithful to the accepted convention ; and within the convention it prescribed an unquestioning acceptance. I began to learn from this the valuable lesson that some of the worst things in life owe their persistence to some of the best, and that the tares of convention, even the very evil ones, may not always be uprooted without bringing away the wheat as well. I myself was not hindered by any sense of loyalty towards the Christian religion ; but my character was none the better, at least for the moment. I was, perhaps—to take the most favourable view—a Jacob in a land of Esaus, less admirable than they, but more flexible and with greater capacity for good or ill.

Nevertheless, mine is a commonplace story so far, because, Jacob though I may have been, I was in many ways a commonplace man, more so, I think, than I am now. I had not then recognised my

Shadowy Companion with his glimpses of light which never was on planetary land or sea: it is to him I owe it if, as I think, I am less commonplace than when I toiled through the three volumes of Mr. Cassels' "Supernatural Religion." But all that time I was growing to seek more and more ardently the one God of whom I knew, the concealed, elusive, partial God, the truth of natural appearance, of science, and of reasoning in the scientific way. I grew to seek truth, this truth of things and men as I saw them then, as a man may seek wealth, or the one woman of his love, or the crown of ambition. "Knowledge hath a bewildering tongue, and she will . . . witch you . . . till gold is a forgotten dross, and power and fame toys of an hour." I became an intellectual truth-seeking machine driven by internal fires; but, although I was far from knowing it, they were fires of the Spirit.

It is a mistake to suppose that the intellectual truth-seeker is really a machine. Behind all his grinding are the fiery demands of his spiritual nature; and if he seeks to reduce the living, glowing, palpitating universe to the likeness of a cotton-gin it is because the divine life-spirit which is his own impels him; he cannot endure the spectacle of a world of disorder, a chaos that is of no kinship with his ordered and ordering rational mind. So he strives with his might to impose upon the manifold events of his experience the order that he most easily conceives; and it is always the spirit in the heart of him that drives.

I look back upon myself at this stage with compassion, coloured with approval. Such energy, such

concentration, such perseverance and devotion in the *lumen siccum* which for me was so often a veritable will-o'-th'-wisp and led me from barren steep to quagmire ; these good things are pitiful in waste. I seem to myself to have been greatly at waste for several years, the waste of search for a Philosopher's Stone in the rubbish-heap, an Elixir of Life among the dead. But no alchemical search has ever been all waste, nor was mine in my efforts after the poor truth of my poor imagination. The mere act of seeking brought gain, as bodily exertion does even when it turns no wheel and lifts no spade. I still rejoice over the gain in effectiveness which I won then, as I still rejoice over my acquaintance with blind alleys of exploration, ways that lead nowhere—an acquaintance giving knowledge which often even now lends point to criticism, weight to judgement, ease to choice. I am sorry for myself as I look backward, but my Shadowy Companion and I are the richer by my extravagance. I spent myself not in vain. I did not find that which I sought, but I was like the treasure-hunter in the fable who dug and dug in his vineyard for hidden gold, and found good wine.

II

THE conception of a religion full-orbed, complete (like the pre-Darwinian conception of a world of living creatures), its origin a matter of past history, isolated, over and done, left me for ever. But there was a difference, a pregnant difference for me, between what I saw of the developing religion and what I saw of the developing world of life. The life-world seemed real, holding to the mind, interest-compelling ; and it implied a well of truth unfathomed, but perhaps fathomable by him who would set bravely and faithfully to work. The story of the religion was only a long fairy tale told by man to himself ; and was due, no doubt, in part to the terrors of helplessness and ignorance, in part to his mythopœic faculty, and his tendency to bad dreams, sleeping and waking ; but above all to the fact that the scientific truth-well had not as yet been fathomed. "Nature—*ut ait Democritus*," says Cicero, "has hidden truth in her depths ;" and it was to this truth, as it would be presented by an ordered and ordering science, that I looked for the deliverance of men from the crude Aberglaube of religion, from its needless terrors and its misleading hopes, its

hindrances to freedom, and the fanaticism to which it gave birth, and out of which had come, and might come again, so much that was adverse to the progress of mankind.

Like Renan in 1848, I, in the sixties and seventies, looked to science to explain man to himself and set him free from the fetters he had forged for his own limbs, and from the false gods who reflected his notions of himself. Anthropomorphism was one of my magic words at that time; when I had said with Montesquieu, "*Si les triangles faisaient un dieu, ils lui donneraient trois côtés,*" I thought I had said all that need be said concerning the traditional framework of the Christian or any other faith. I am bound to add, however, that I honestly sought to strengthen the position to which my mind inclined, by seeking any possible defeat at the hands of the defenders of religion. I found them playing for, rather than fighting against, my victory. The conflict resembled the battles of the Japan-Chinese war, when the Chinamen marched into action with bows and arrows and umbrellas. It looked to me like a play-affair. Not until 1890 did I meet with apologetic work by Christians to which I was able in any measure to attach importance. I met it then in parts of "Lux Mundi." Had I been a scholar I should doubtless have seen that Dr. Lightfoot had thrown "Supernatural Religion" into the scrap-heap; but I was no scholar, I was only the intelligent English man-in-the-street, and the polemic and apologetic pamphlets and books of essays which were addressed to me failed, without any exception

that I discovered, even to grasp the purport of the new difficulties that had come to light. The protective umbrella was obvious ; the arrows were shot, it almost seemed, at an imaginary target, so widespread was the *ignoratio elenchi*, the delusion concerning the nature of the attack and the weak places of defence.

In this I am one of many brethren, and although I have no clear record of the details of my thought at this time, many of my brethren have done better. The late Sir Leslie Stephen, for example, in his "Agnostic's Apology," lately reprinted by the Rationalist Press Association, has done well, and his record bears me out.

"We are struggling with hard facts," he says, for example, "and they would arm us with the forgotten tools of scholasticism. We wish for spiritual food, and are to be put off with these ancient mummeries of forgotten dogma. If Agnosticism is the frame of mind which summarily rejects these imbecilities, and would restrain the human intellect from wasting its powers on the attempt to galvanise into sham activity this *caput mortuum* of old theology, nobody need be afraid of the name. Argument against such adversaries would be itself a foolish waste of time. Let the dead bury their dead. . . ."

This passage refers to "a string of propositions framed—so we were assured—by some of the most candid and most learned of living theologians," which appeared in the papers. They were professedly dogmatic, and only by implication apologetic ; but they were addressed, at least in some fashion, to the

infidelity of that day by the upholders of orthodox belief.

"I know not whether these dogmas were put forward as articles of faith," says Sir Leslie, "as pious conjectures, or as tentative contributions to a sound theory. At any rate, it was supposed that they were interesting to flesh and blood. If so, one can only ask in wonder whether an utter want of reverence is most strongly implied in this mode of dealing with sacred mysteries; or an utter ignorance of the existing state of the world, . . . or an utter incapacity for speculation in the confusion of these dead exuviae of long past modes of thought with living intellectual tissue; or an utter want of imagination, or of even a rudimentary sense of humour, in the hypothesis that the promulgation of such dogmas could produce anything but the laughter of sceptics and the contempt of the healthy human intellect."

I repeat—this refers to a dogmatic pronouncement; but—I repeat also—the apologetic pronouncements of that day were just as wide of the mark, if men like either Sir Leslie Stephen, or such humble inquirers as myself, were in fact the mark at which they were aimed.

I do not blame the theologians in particular; we were all to blame, and all not to blame. We were all then, as now, in process of revising convictions—our own and other people's—and we were doing it in the glare of a light that dazzled and confused us. The light had not yet become our own on either side; so we fought half-blinded by it, and cumbered, too, with the weight of many matters both sides have ever since been learning to discard.

At that time even a truce was impossible ; and for not a few men like myself the attacks and the defensive explanations of religious or theological men did more harm to the Christian cause than anything that was said upon the other side. I came out from that field of battle with a good conscience, turning my back upon religion as upon a pretender understood, a bubble of imposture pricked once for all, to which I had given every chance of proving itself a solid thing.

Looking back upon this period I see now how right and reasonable I was, and yet how blind. I can make a sort of diagram of the fight and understand it better. On one side, I see the theologians, good or bad—most of them, of course, bad, because good theologians are in any period few ; on the other side, men of various sorts, some scientific, most unscientific, but all intoxicated with heady draughts of the new wine. The theologians were, to a man, in what I may call for brevity the scholastic stage of thought ; the others were newly promoted to the modern evolutionary stage. *Totus teres atque rotundus*, the theological world seemed to the theologians (even to the best of them at first) ; an attack on any part of it was an attack upon the whole ; a confessed flaw in any part would be a confessed disintegration of the whole. The theological world, they thought, had not *grown*, it had *come*, and it was there, *à prendre ou à laisser*. An impossible position it seems now ; and yet it is by no means everywhere abandoned, even now. Then it seemed the only position, either for attack or for defence, in the field

surveyed by men like myself. There were great men above all conflict, but they were invisible to us lesser men who were enveloped in the dust and din of battle.

The lesser men held popular attention; and they defended the indefensible, attacked the wrong things. So we see now. But in the whole confusion our most confusing ignorance was our ignorance of the constitution of man.

At that time we were all, whether scientific or theological or plain men, far more in the dark concerning the human mind than we are now. The advance which psychology has made of late years perhaps outdoes in significance the advance of all other sciences; and certainly it has cast more light upon the secrets of "the conflict between religion and science," than has any other new gain in knowledge. The irresistible power of science over our convictions lies in its ultimate appeal to experience, and in the unfailing response of our experience. The power of religion does, in truth, lie in making precisely the same appeal, and finding precisely the same response; but the appeal has never been made as steadily and as generally as it should be made. In consequence, and especially at times when the appeal is more than usually neglected, criticism is ever defeating theology and making, it seems, religion to be absurd; and yet, in spite of all the progress criticism makes, religion is not destroyed, nor become absurd. Religion, we begin to see now, is an enduring aspect of the will-to-live, and brings with it reasonable justification for faith in the

conservation of the worth of life. We are learning that its invincible strength lies just where the strength of science lies—in man himself, in his constitution and in the character of his experience. The difference between the two appeals and, indeed, the two strengths, is in this—that religion appeals to the whole man and science does not. Science appeals in the main to his rationalising part. Therefore it comes about that if a man chooses to pretend to himself through life (after the right manner of the scientific worker for his work) that he is incomplete ; if he persistently pretends that at his best and most trustworthy he is a mere rationalising machine, he may not find in himself any answer to the religious appeal. It is of the essence of the scientific appeal that he should for the moment pretend just such incompleteness as will serve the particular scientific purpose of the moment, the particular critical or constructive purpose of a rationalising machine in its dealings with confused experience ; but it is of the essence of the religious appeal that it should be made to the whole man, and have reference to his whole life.

In those days of the sixties and seventies psychology had not taught us certain enormously important facts concerning the whole man ; and most religious men made too little of their own authority as constituting the ultimate authority for religion as well as for science. They defended the Pentateuch, in fact, not themselves ; and they defended it because they held the Bible, or the Church, or the Church and the Bible, to be an isolated record of the voice of God. They held a theory of revelation which made it, of a

piece with the writing of the Commandments on the Tables of Stone. They thought that it came through a medium which conducted it as the stone was supposed to conduct the writing of the finger of God. True, the medium, being human, sometimes failed, sometimes introduced other matters, even irrelevancies—this was admitted by the more liberal minds ; but the principle held good. The Word of God came to man by a kind of compulsion from without, and man himself was used as its passive, although sometimes faulty, transmitter. God the giver was separate from man the transmitter and receiver ; and the transmitter and receiver was rather an inert channel and vessel than a freely co-operating personal being, who must make the matter of a revelation his own in order that it may be revealed to him.

III

I TURNED away from those vain controversial battles ; and, full of hope in the investigation that was to me so new and promising, I began to study science with practical seriousness. I attained at length a point of view whence I was able to see it with comprehension of its method, and a grasp of its results, beyond that of the mere amateur or dabbler, far beyond that of the man who only reads the more popular books about it, or the travesties given by those who use it as a stalking-horse to controversial success on one side or the other. I worked steadily, worked in laboratories, was credited with the possession of the scientific spirit, aided my teachers, even taught sometimes in their place. I was no dilettante in the work ; I threw myself into it with the ardour of a man seeing his one chance there of that which he most desired, and I had my great reward.

My admiration for the method of science, and my estimate of the value of its results, are greater if more discriminating now, than when I was myself a somewhat blind worker in its field. The scientific method of endeavouring to cast the world into a more rational shape in our minds than it has in the

disorder of unsystematised experience, stands for me among the greatest achievements and the most powerful instruments of man. I had my reward in my work, but I had also my disappointment. After a time I discovered that, like other instruments, the wonderful method of science was devised, and was successful, only in relation to certain purposes that were not far-reaching, although for a long time I did not know how to define their limits. I know now ; and I am able to clear up my own perplexity by casting upon the confusion of bygone years some light of later ones. As I have set down already the fact that I was then asking of science what many men asked it, and Renan put into words, I can hardly do better than state our demand in his words.

"For myself," he says, "I know but one result of science ; it is to solve the enigma, to tell man definitely the names of things, to explain him to himself. It is to give him in the name of the only human authority—that is, the whole of human nature—the symbols which religion gave him ready-made, and which he can no longer accept. Yes, there will come a day when man will believe no longer, he will know ; a day when he will know the world of metaphysics and morals as he knows already the physical world."

It was the delusion of a newly-awakened generation, a generation, too, that found itself suddenly endowed with great riches, the result, it seemed, of a process that could find no check, that might be carried beyond the very stars and into the inmost

heart of man. We know better now ; but there is no need that we should talk of the "bankruptcy of science," to use M. Brunetière's expression, as extending to her own affairs. Science is not bankrupt, save as to the deep things of the fulness of life, where her affairs do not properly extend ; but in those days of glamour we expected from her that which she in herself never promised and never pretended to bestow. She has worked her miracles for us (as other miracles are worked, by life and its power), and she has stretched out the senses and the limbs of man, and opened worlds for his use. She has given him a manner, a method, and means for the conquest and the rule of his earth ; and she is beginning now to tell him truths about himself which will bring her voice, perhaps before many years have passed, into harmony with other voices which he cannot help but hear, voices of his heart and soul, and from beyond the stars. It is surely enough ; let us therefore face her method, her manner, and her means, and cease to reproach her for not bestowing on us that which we have neither right nor reason to ask.

I quote now the following passage from my own writings (in which I was obviously inspired by Dr. James Ward and Professor Karl Pearson) to show how the question of the logic of science presented itself to me a few years back, but I shall have to say more of this important matter. At the time when I first found the inadequacy of science to my demands I did not see things as clearly as when I wrote this passage ; but I saw them clearly enough to determine the direction of my further quest.

"For some scientific men, and probably for a still greater number of the outsiders who follow them in their unscientific speculations about existence and experience, the mechanical theory is taken as giving a true or facsimile picture of the real concrete things of the universe. In spite of the obviously abstract or else ideal character of their method, they hold themselves justified in regarding the universe as a huge automatic machine made up of 'matter' and 'motion,' 'atoms,' 'molecules' and 'force,' or 'energy,' or whatever the chosen set of terms may be; and its parts, the concrete things, as appearing to us under disguises, so to speak, of qualities which we perceive through our senses, such as hardness, yellowness, brightness, and the like. The mechanical scheme is considered by such men as a means by which they penetrate through all this disguise and get to the *reality* underneath the sensible 'appearance.' Here lies the source of most of the trouble that physics brings into the field of controversy, either directly, or indirectly through biology; and the justification for that trouble-giving, so far as there is justification for it, probably consists in the fact that the mechanical theory enables us to predict what will happen under given conditions, for instance, of the astronomical bodies, or of our own arrangements of material on the surface of the earth. It is, however, hardly necessary to add that the same practical result would be attained by the application of this theory, even if every bit of material were animated by a fairy, *as long as the fairies were governed in accordance with one ordering, all-wise, and constant, purposive mind.* This truth has been brought out in an example cited by Professor Pearson, and due to Mr. Stuart, formerly Professor of Mechanism at Cambridge. 'Suppose,' he says, 'I were to put a stone on a piece of flat ground, and walk round it in that particular curve termed an ellipse, which a planet describes about

the sun... Now, my motion might be very fairly described by the law of gravitation, but it is quite clear that no force from the stone to me, no law of gravitation, could logically be said to cause my motion in the ellipse.' A description, however accurate (and scientific description is never quite accurate), of the universe as we perceive it, can never enable us to answer the question of what lies or does not lie beyond the range of our perception. If changes are caused from behind that manifesting veil the fact and the manner of their being caused cannot be made known either by a mere account of their appearance and way of changing, or by an ideal picture of a mechanism that might, conceivably, effect the change. We may not feel justified in saying they are *not* thus caused, but we may reasonably say that our science does not and cannot show it.

"There is, indeed, at the present time, an increasing recognition of the fact that first principles of existence, cause, and purpose, lie beyond the scope of physical science. There is a growing school of men who regard the mechanical theory, for example, as not only descriptive, but as descriptive in a purely *symbolic* way, and hold that the terms used only represent ideal mental conceptions, which are employed when put together in a formula—for instance, in the law of gravitation—to enable us to sum up economically by a convenient sort of shorthand the changes perceived in our sense-impressions. Professor Pearson gives an excellent account of this, his own view of the subject, in his 'Grammar of Science.' He writes as follows:—'Atom and molecule are intellectual conceptions, by aid of which physicists classify phenomena, and formulate the relationships between their sequences; . . . the geometry of motion . . . is the conceptual mode in which we classify and describe perceptual change. Its validity depends not upon its corresponding absolutely to anything in the

real world—a correspondence at once rebutted by the ideal character of geometrical forms—but upon the power it gives us of briefly resuming the facts of perception and of economising thought. . . . Science is not a final explanation of anything. It is not a *plan* which lies in phenomena themselves. Science may be described as a classified index to the successive pages of sense-impression, but it in no wise accounts for the peculiar structure of that strange book of life. . . . The whole object of physical science is the discovery of ideal elementary motions, which will enable us to describe in the simplest language the widest ranges of phenomena; it lies in the symbolisation of the physical universe, by aid of the geometrical motions of a group of geometrical forms. To do this is to construct the world mechanically; but *this mechanism*, be it noted, *is a product of conception, and does not lie in the perceptions themselves.*' Of what produces those perceptions, of what some scientific people would call the *real* things, Professor Pearson assures us that all that science would dare to say is that they have 'a capacity for producing sense-impressions,' and he whittles down even this cautious statement until it becomes a meaningless concession to the obstinate questioner. By scientific men of this class the so-called reality underlying sense-impressions is held to be *metaphysical*, and therefore, in the scientific sense, unknowable, whether it be nominally dignified as matter, mind, will, force, spirit, or what not. The scientific descriptive scheme is looked upon as symbolic, its laws, and even its space and time, are considered to be *made by* the conceptual and ratiocinative power of the human mind, while the character of the material with which it deals, which is the perceived 'routine' of sense-impressions, is held to be what it is in consequence of the character of the perceptive power of that mind.

Scientific men of this class tell us that the field of science is no 'real and independent outer world'; but is confined to the contents of the mind, and is fashioned after the pattern of the mind's working. The results of scientific labour amount to the attainment of a symbolic description of these contents of the mind, simplified by the aid of formulæ which are themselves as much the product of the mind as are the formulæ of mathematics, and owe all their validity and necessity to that fact, and not to any necessity lying in an outer world."

The importance of deciding between the two schools of which I spoke in this passage (or in favour of some other conception of science) may be seen on studying the statements concerning mental processes of those physiologists who believe that physical science is touching, so to speak, the inner secret of real things. Huxley, for example, says in one of his discussions :—

"It follows that our mental conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of the changes which take place automatically in the organism; and that, to take an extreme illustration, the feeling we call volition is not the immediate cause of the voluntary act, but the symbol of the state of the brain, which is the immediate cause of the act. We are conscious automata."

There is also a passage in Dr. Mercier's "Nervous System and the Mind" which illustrates this point, and concerning which I have something more to say a little later.

"Let us try," he says, "to imagine an idea, say of food, producing a movement, say of carrying food to

the mouth. . . . What is the method of its action? Does it assist the decomposition of the molecules of the grey matter, or does it retard the process, or does it alter the directions in which the shocks are distributed? Let us imagine the molecules of the grey matter combined in such a way that they will fall into simpler combinations on the impact of an incident force. Now suppose the incident force, in the shape of a shock from some other centre, to impinge upon these molecules. By hypothesis it will decompose them, and they will fall into the simpler combination. How is the idea of food to prevent this decomposition? Manifestly it can do so only by increasing the force which binds the molecules together. Good! Try to imagine the idea of a beef-steak binding two molecules together. It is impossible. Equally impossible is it to imagine a similar idea loosening the attractive force between two molecules."

Upon this remarkable passage Professor James comments thus:—

"The fact is that the whole question of interaction and influence between things is a metaphysical question, and cannot be discussed at all by those who are unwilling to go into matters thoroughly. . . . Popular science talks of 'forces,' 'attractions,' or 'affinities,' as binding the molecules; but clear science, though she may use such words to abbreviate discourse, has no use for the conceptions, and is satisfied when she can express in simple 'laws' the bare space-relations of the molecules as functions of each other and of time."

And in relation to all such popular and often unconsciously professed metaphysics, Professor Pearson pertinently says:—

"If we always remember that the physicists' fundamental conception of change of motion of one particle is associated with its position relative to other particles, and that force is a certain convenient measure of this change, then, I think, we shall be in a safer position to interpret clearly the numerous biological statements which involve an appeal to the conception of force. . . . We shall be better able to appreciate the real substance which lies beneath the metaphysical clothing with which biological, like physical, statements are too often draped."

For the physicist who works with this kind of "clear science," the molecules of the brain are ideal concepts of the mind, and the state of the brain, of which Huxley speaks, if it were known at all, would be known only in symbolic terms as a diagram constructed by the mind. On the other hand, the physiologist, when he takes the symbols of physics to be realities, as a child takes the elves of fairyland, supposes mind and its states to be mere symbols; and we have the ridiculous picture of a set of symbols symbolic of another set of symbols, and no reality anywhere. This kind of physiologist is of course pledged to the metaphysical school of physicists in order to escape the difficulty of having no reality anywhere; but as a rule he does not know that it is a metaphysical school, and he talks glibly of atoms and so on as established realities of "that which lies behind phenomena." Professor Pearson says that the physiologist habitually "takes his stand with the physicist who asserts the phenomenal existence of the concepts atom and molecule." It is easy to see that if he does this he may very reasonably come to

regard mind as a mere product or shadow or aspect of body, an empty symbol of its full realities.

Fortunately it is growing more difficult for careful thinkers to take sides with those scientific men who unscientifically build up metaphysical systems upon uncriticised assumptions and useful but not universal postulates, although system-building of this phenomenalist kind still goes on. "When phenomenism," says Mr. Bradley, "loses its head, and, becoming blatant, steps forward as a theory of first principles, then it is really not respectable. The best that can be said of its pretensions is that they are ridiculous."

As for me, even in those days of my beginning, before I wrote what I have just quoted, I saw enough of the logic of science to convince me that I must go further, that I must at least go where nothing human was alien, where life was reckoned with as something more of a whole. When I had seen this, all the splendid conquests of science failed to keep me at her feet. I recognised in her the mistress of the use and management of things, the giver into the hands of man of an Aladdin's lamp—the mastership and government of the world; but my desirous heart asked more. "Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease," she stood, this lady of great gifts; and I turned away from her and set my face to follow the pointing finger of my unresting other self, whom nothing of this superficial world can wholly please.

"Every man's own reason is his best Oedipus," says Sir Thomas Browne: the riddles of my reason could not be answered by science; its problems went too far, they touched reality at too many points for a

method which deals with only abstracted parts of real things. My Oedipus set before me questions of "the great deep sacred infinitude of Nescience on which all science swims as a mere superficial film." What was I to do? The answer was obvious. I took my riddles to the philosophers, because I saw they were their own.

Yet I see now that science, even in those days, might have taught me more than I allowed her to teach, had I been perhaps more patient, or even nothing better than more critical. I might have learnt, for example, to see that although that significant fetich of the plain man, Cause and Effect, is reduced in science to a chain of antecedence and sequence in which efficient cause and its effect have no place, yet the very fact suggests, in view of the obstinate persistence of the fetich, that there may be a cause behind as well as within the phenomenal chain, a cause of which the whole chain of events and of scientific causation would be effect. Experience, persistent experience, of personal activity no doubt sustains the fetich, but it is not the less significant for that. True, such a manner of thinking was very likely then out of my reach, because the atmosphere, under the conditions of the "psychological climate" of those days, was not favourable to it. I know that I often read my present into my past, and sometimes mislead my judgement of myself thereby; but, to confess the truth, I can hardly credit myself with the stupidity of missing this finger-post upon my way. Yet, may be, fog blotted it out in that heavy air, for me as for many more. There remains the fact that I

can see now many such finger-posts of science, many indications that even in her dogmatising she is very religiously in the right way, and is herself a great revealer. At least she certainly shows that, as Mr. Schiller says:—"The world of phenomena, the sphere of positive science, is *not* self-supporting, self-sufficing, and self-explaining ; it points beyond itself to a reality which underlies it, back to a past from which it is descended, and forward to a future it foreshadows."

More important still, as hiding from me in the sixties and seventies the drift and meaning of science, was the mistake of thinking that in the act of rationalising and systematising the raw material of experience—ordering the world as it comes to us higgledy-piggledy—there was no vitiating element of self-interest, of feeling, of passion and the heart. Here alone, it seemed, in this work of systematising, the bias of the heart was excluded ; here alone, then, could the results of inquiry be fully trusted as being approved and attained by a reason without personal bias, without the will-to-believe one thing rather than another. I was wrong ; we were all wrong. As a matter of fact, scientific men are possessed of a really passionate, if apparently calm, desire to find the pattern of their own rationality reflected in the world, to discover there just that which matches it and satisfies the hunger of the rationalising heart. A world of anyhow, such as is given in the experience that is unclassified and has not been subjected to the processes of science, is for the scientific man a world of raw material that must be cooked before he can swallow it. He is sure that it is capable of feeding

him ; its inner secret is the possession of a capacity to match and fulfil his rational desire. At bottom it is rational, he is sure, in virtue of its 'unifying ground' ; he has only to find out the appropriate way of treating it, and the fact will emerge from its apparent multiplicity, confusion, and irregularity. He believes with his whole heart in a "unifying ground" which makes it a whole. And all the time he is driven by the passion of his heart ; and in his search the sphere of his operations as well as the manner of them is determined by his personal interests and his faith. He picks out that part of experience which he has discovered to be most amenable to his ordering process ; and he neglects the rest. That which does not readily enter his system is in many and very important cases regarded as either negligible, like the efficient activity of the human mind in relation to body, or as a bare inaccessible "unknowable," which is in truth nothing at all. Beliefs connected with these latter worthless or impotent things are brought about, so he says if he takes this line, by a personal desire to believe. In consequence they have neither authority nor validity ; but the beliefs connected with science have the supreme authority of unbiased reason, which in all scientific men is as ready for disbelief as for belief.

So this scientific man cuts up a brain, let us say, and finds a self-acting machine ; he sweeps the heavens with his telescope and finds only blind monstrous lumps of shining stuff ; but he does not try to find out why he confines himself to such remarkable instruments of search for the truth of

either man or God. It rarely enters his head that he chooses them and keeps to them and draws inferences from what they give him, because the passion of his heart demands just those things that they are fitted to reveal—things which will fit a mechanically-conceived and ideally-expressed order, a system like the small systems men are making successfully on a small scale for use in other ways; a system he can express confidently, simply, satisfactorily, just and only because by a process of rigorous and biased selection he has reduced the fulness of living flesh and blood and spirit experience to that desiccated skeleton. His heart is there, in this work and method and aim, as another man's heart is in his belief in the spiritual determining power of men, or in the effective love of a living God. Valid as scientific generalisations doubtless are in their place and for their time, splendid as are the practical triumphs of science, the personal selective interest of the scientific man has entered into both his work and his beliefs as it enters into the work and the belief of every man; and the authority of any scheme that he may frame by inference from his knowledge cannot be regarded as exempt from the common character of all such things, that of being affected throughout by the personal bias of the framer.

To set the heart of the rationaliser in supreme authority is mere superstition, the superstition of an age hampered with the detritus of older and shattered superstitions, and unable to do anything less imitative than setting a new one in their place. It is the Golden Calf of the Aufklärung, and we have

worshipped it far too long. The *Man* is coming down to us now and his countenance enlightens the world. The Man is godlike; no Golden Calf contents him; he must have that fulness of life which will fill his whole desirous heart with reason and righteousness and beauty, and, above all, with love. What he seeks he will find. So great is faith, whether it be of the scientific man or any other man.

The office of the rationalising intelligence is sufficiently important to satisfy any man who is not the slave of an idol; the rational powers must put to an essential test the demands and attainments of all the rest of human nature. The demands of reason must be fulfilled, but it must be enlightened reason; and it must reckon with the whole of experience, not merely with a part. Once it does this the Golden Calf will doubtless be cast down; but the sphere of effective rationality will be enlarged. We may, indeed, find in the long run that the safest and most far-reaching test of anything is not "*Can we think it rationally?*" but "*Does it work?*" yet in the long run as well as in the short the demands of rationality should and must be met; and even the working test, the pragmatic test, must meet and not conflict with those demands, although it penetrates, perhaps, beyond them.

The lesson of which I have been speaking, the lesson I had not learnt in my young days, is that *no* authority can claim pre-eminence as free from the bias of feeling, of passion, and the heart. I have only lately grasped this truth definitely and rationally. When I grasped it I felt the last rags of the

sacerdotal garments in which I had worshipped the Golden Calf slip from me. But there remains with me still, purified and heightened, the truth which that idol symbolised, the truth of the world's ultimate and real rationality, a rationality including and over-passing that which the scientific man has been enabled to discover through his faith in a unifying ground of all things. The unifying ground in which he believes is real, and if it seems to him meagre and un-Godlike, that is only because his heart's desire is meagre too.

"Some say the earth is even so contrived
That tree and flower, a vesture gay, conceal
A bare and skeleton framework."

But if men find the framework only, it must be because the ardour of their truth-seeking desire has spent itself in that arid search.

IV

THERE is no doubt in my mind that I was at one time, before I began to make discoveries in the matter of the logic of science, not only profoundly influenced but more disturbed and saddened than I dared admit to myself, by the scientific doctrine of the ineffectiveness of mental processes in relation to bodily changes. I thought that this doctrine fitted the widely accepted and apparently reasonable automaton theory of the physical world better than any other. A world going by itself, and a human body which was part of the machine-world, both made up of one self-complete, self-sufficient, unbroken network of antecedence and sequence, subject to laws of conservation of energy and momentum, left no place for the intrusion of feeling or will. No mental process could possibly intrude, it seemed, as an effective activity within the complete circle of the mechanism of things.

Professor Clifford was the *enfant terrible* of the day, and in the Reviews he showed us plainly to what consequences we were drawing near. I forget where the following passage appeared ; but I remember that it impressed me not as a *reductio ad absurdum*—I did

not know enough for that—but as the reduction of my own life to a *caput mortuum*.

"All the evidence that we have," he said, "goes to show that the physical world gets along entirely by itself, according to practically universal rules. . . . Again, if anybody says that the will influences matter, the statement is not untrue, it is nonsense. Such an assertion belongs to the crude materialism of the savage. The only thing which influences matter is the position of surrounding matter or the motion of surrounding matter. . . . It will be found excellent practice in the mental operations required by this doctrine [that will does influence matter] to imagine a train, the fore part of which is an engine and three carriages linked with iron couplings, and the hind part three other carriages linked with iron couplings; the bond between the two parts being made up out of the sentiments of amity subsisting between the stoker and the guard."

I find this familiar passage (with much more from Clifford) quoted recently in James's "Principles of Psychology." Professor James ("not the psychologist who writes novels, but his brother, the humorist, who writes psychology," as some witty man explains) has a characteristic comment upon it. He says—

"To comprehend completely the consequences of the dogma so confidently enunciated, one should unflinchingly apply it to the most complicated examples. The movements of our tongues and pens, the flashings of our eyes in conversations, are, of course, events of a material order, and as such their causal antecedents must be exclusively material. If we knew thoroughly the nervous system of Shakespeare, and as thoroughly all his environing conditions,

we should be able to show why at a certain period of his life his hand came to trace on certain sheets of paper those crabbed little black marks which we for shortness' sake call the manuscript of Hamlet. We should understand the rationale of every erasure and alteration therein, and we should understand all this without in the slightest degree acknowledging the existence of the thoughts in Shakespeare's mind. The words and sentences would be taken, not as signs of anything beyond themselves, but as little outward facts, pure and simple. In like manner we might exhaustively write the biography of those two hundred pounds, more or less, of warmish albuminoid matter called Martin Luther, without ever implying that it felt.

"But, on the other hand, nothing in all this could prevent us from giving an equally complete account of either Luther's or Shakespeare's spiritual history, an account in which every gleam of thought and emotion should find its place. The mind-history would run alongside of the body-history of each man, and each point in the one would correspond to, but not re-act upon, a point in the other. So the melody floats from the harp-string, but neither checks nor quickens its vibrations ; so the shadow runs alongside the pedestrian, but in no way influences his steps."

In opposition to Professor James, Dr. Charles Mercier, whose "beefsteak" dictum I have quoted, still bravely welcomes the consequences of this dogma in the spirit of the Old Guard of the seventies.

"Having firmly and tenaciously grasped," he says, "these two notions, of the absolute separateness of mind and matter, and of the invariable concomitance of a mental change with a bodily change, the student will enter on the study of psychology with half his difficulties surmounted."

The Old Guard never surrenders : if facts are obstinate *tant pis pour les faits*; we will pass them by, and in this magnificent manner half our difficulties shall be surmounted.

It is to me still a puzzling memory that I did not more quickly find out the absurdity as well as the reasonableness of this attitude of scientific men. Bent upon simplicity of arrangement, and tied to certain regulative principles of uniformity and so on, physicists and physiologists could not reasonably concern themselves with *efficient* causes anywhere in connection with the chain of "natural" causation or invariable sequence; nor could the physiologists tolerate an interference of the psychical half of the world (which they had set aside) with the mechanical accuracy and completeness of the physical half which they had chosen as their own. They had severed the whole of experience into halves, and they had to abide the evil consequences as well as profit by the good. The psychologists followed suit. For economy in scientific classification, and for methodological purposes, the cleavage into the two spheres of body and mind, matter and spirit, as being separate but concomitant, is not only useful but often necessary. For the purpose of interpreting the whole of experience it is not only useless but absurd ; and it naturally issued in absurd schemes of speculative thought from which we are suffering still. We may reasonably enough exclude "the sentiments of amity subsisting between the stoker and the guard" in our account of the mechanical system of linkage of the train, but when it comes to an interpretation of a railway accident those

sentiments may be found to intrude as importantly as the sentiments of Shakespeare intrude into Hamlet, when we take its history and meaning as a whole. Besides, as Dr. Ward says, "What if there are not two spheres; and if only one, what if the psychical is that one?" This possibility, however, never crossed my mind at the period of which I am writing. The wonderful success of the scientific method blinded me both to the dangers and to the true character of scientific abstraction and consequent dualism, as it still blinds many men; and I did not see the futility of applying to the interpretation of a whole—the interpretation of *a man's own experience as it is for him*—that which was reached by cutting it in two and throwing away one half of it. I was still blind to the fact that *in his own experience* a man never knows, nor can know, "matter," by itself or "spirit" by itself; or either "subject" or "object" in abstraction and alone—which shows how hard it is to see that which is closest to one's eyes.

Now, looking back over the road of my progress in learning to see the thing that lies closest, learning to see more fairly the character of my own experience, I begin to wonder whether scientific men may not some day discover in that great metaphysical question of the "binding" of two molecules of a beefsteak, a way (perhaps through some temporary stage of neutral monism) out of the *impasse* of absurdity in which dualism has landed their speculation. Is it not possible, I ask myself, is it even improbable, that this binding affair of the molecules of the beefsteak and of the brain, if we could lay hands upon it, would be

found to extend further than the beefsteak or the brain? Is it not possible, is it even improbable, that the mysterious transmigration—if it be transmigration—of changes from the psychical to the physical, and from the physical to the psychical, which to our scientific confusion always *will* seem to occur, may be effected through the continuity of the mysterious “binding” of things—through this *inter*-molecular, *intra*-molecular, *inter*- and *intra*-atomic mystery? May not the psychical “half” of me be bound in a true wholeness to the physical “half” of me by an extension of the same mysterious bond which keeps the molecules of the brain and of the beefsteak together? And may it not be that after all it is far truer to say that I am one, not two; and that I am one in an organic unity in diversity and difference, which is best spoken of as psychical, not physical? Surely it is rather psychically than physically that I seem to myself *central*, *continuous*, *selective*, and *directive* in the striving of my life? May it not be that as a matter of fact my feelings and my will affect the molecules of my brain through the mysterious linkage of all physical parts, and that through the same means their changes affect me, while I, as psychical, constitute the whole as a whole, and raise the physical to a higher power instead of myself entering the lower? Sensation is for the psychologist as great a difficulty as life is for the physiologist. In sensation something from the physical side somehow makes a difference on the psychical side. How does a physical change influence anything so utterly unlike it as a psychical change? I cannot imagine, says the psychologist.

"No analysis," he says, in the person of Mr. Stout, "can discover in the psychological fact any traces of its supposed physical factors."

How does a living organism, just because it is living, build up and keep repaired complex molecules in its body, maintaining them through changes, anabolic and katabolic, that defy the stream of physical sequence, the stream of change to which at death they finally succumb? How does this "life" effect such an amazing interruption of the downward course of physical change? How can that which is not "motion" and is not "matter" influence the "motion" and the "matter" of these molecules? It does, but how? I cannot imagine, says the physiologist. Just so; and the psychologist owns that although as man he feels a pin-prick, he cannot as psychologist imagine how the physical jar of those body-molecules makes him have a "pain-sensation." Out of this "cannot imagine" has arisen the evasion of the significance of the facts by a doctrine of mental processes as mere epiphenomena, or by a doctrine of psycho-physical parallelism, wherein neither process affects its fellow, although both go side by side in irrational harmony.

To the plain man, looking on at such difficulties, it seems that there must be something fundamentally wrong about the inferences and guesses of these specialists. At least it seems so to me now; but that is because men who are not plain, men who are philosophical thinkers, have opened my eyes. The specialists have been too special—I have learnt to see. Each has evaded difficulties by a simple process

of excluding anything which declined to submit to specialist legislation. Between them they have excavated and widened the gulf between "body" and "mind" which the plain man imagines, but which he never perceives in any part of his own experience. And here is the way of trouble for the plain man. Habitually he imagines that there is this gulf between his body and his mind ; but he does not imagine it to be without bridges. He pictures his actions and his sensations as passing lightly and easily from body side to mind side, and *vice versa*. Not being accustomed to think carefully and perseveringly, he finds no difficulty in this ; but if he begins to learn about science he does not lose the dualistic superstition, he rather formulates it, and then, although he keeps the gulf and the two sides, his bridges very naturally fall into his gulf. "Matter" I know, he says, speaking quasi-scientifically, and "mind" I know ; but what and where is the *tertium quid* that is neither, and yet shall carry influence from one to the other of these disparate incommensurable things ? It is only when we call to mind that the link between two molecules of beefsteak and between earth and sun is every bit as mysterious to science that we begin to take his difficulties at their right value. Gravity is for the physicist as mysterious as life is for the physiologist, and sensation for the psychologist. There is a new method of "psycho-physics," a method which, as James says, "taxes patience to the utmost, and could hardly have arisen in a country whose natives could be *bored*," by means of which devoted men are measuring sensation as Newton measured gravitation. Yet it is

a fond superstition to think that by this measuring the element of mystery is removed from either.

The suggestion that now commends itself to me is that because the binding business, whether between two masses or two molecules, or between mind and brain, is always and equally mysterious for science, and perhaps always and equally significant for us all, it is not wise to accept the fact in two cases and either deny it or evade its purport in the third.

We are nevertheless prone to do this both in scientific circles and in the plain men's circles, because where molecules and masses and *other* men's bodies are concerned we look at and study only such things as in the scientific and the plain way are commensurate and of one order; and so we come to recognise that their relations imply only an easily pictured bond of union which is of their own order, and need not, as it were, partake of two characters at once. One molecule of a beefsteak may—we can easily imagine—be joined to another molecule by something of the same order of existence as the two molecules; they are neither disparate nor incommensurate. One railway carriage may be joined to another by an iron coupling, because all these three wood and iron things are of one order. But how shall I join pin-prick to pain-sensation? How shall I picture the link between immaterial life and the unstable material molecule which, nevertheless, by life, and only by life, seems to be kept from falling to pieces? It is as though one should try to join a poem to a pound of that beef-steak. And yet,

somehow, even this conjunction is effected, in our mysterious world.

The truth is that there is one place in our mysterious world where we get, as it were, to the inside of poems and beefsteaks ; and only one. There we have no difficulty in discoyering what organic unity practically means. Give the right man a beefsteak and he will unite it to a poem, as Shakespeare did. In his own experience the man finds beefsteaks (as they are built up in himself into "body" for his use), not separate from himself, not disparate, only diverse. He finds a *duality*, no doubt, but not a *dualism*. He is an example for himself of organic unity in difference, as he knows himself from within. Only there does he get, so to speak, at the inside of the scientific machine ; and there he finds it no machine but a life working orderly—the golden tree of life whose leaves are green, not grey.

In the first part of the stage of criticism wherein I succeeded in distinguishing my own real world of experience, that golden tree which is alive and "green," as Goethe says, from the "grey" world of science and scientific *Theorie*, I was inclined to fear that this latter world was not only unreal, but invalid ; and to contrast it with my own experienced world as one might contrast, say, Polichinelle with Coquelin, as interpreter of dramatic truth. But I have come to a better mind. Now I see that Polichinelle is unreal only when I take him for something he is not ; so that if I take him as Polichinelle—mere, yet actual Polichinelle—he has his reality just as Coquelin has his when taken for the all-marvellous

Coquelin; and, therefore, even Polichinelle has the validity that in his place he needs.

It is nonsense, and ungrateful nonsense, to set aside the world of science as invalid just because it is either abstract or idealised. We men pool, so far as may be, our experiences, in the interaction of our social intercourse. We cannot pool our experiences completely, or as each is for its one agent and subject; but we transmit what we can of them to each other, to be made again unique in each, as each of us enters thus into possession of a common knowledge of the experience in the whole body of interacting individuals. In our social intercourse we toss and turn about and weave together the materials we have obtained from our fellows, and from this living process there emerges at last a common scientific *Theorie* of things. But it is rooted in my experience as well as in the scientific man's, and it belongs, even as *Theorie*, to the organic unity in which his experience and mine are one; and wherein we may, each one of us, take possession of it and make it individual. As a self-conscious being I share common knowledge, common products of reflexion, and all processes of the social and intelligent world in which I am a part. There is an experience of the social body to which I belong; and because I really do belong to the social body, the outcome of the experience may belong to me: thus "experience is throughout one organic unity," as Man is one organic unity, and it is so whether it be individual or the experience of all.

I cannot afford to regard the results of the scientific working-up of our experience with dislike or

even with indifference. They are products of Man's activity ; and if I bear in mind that *Theorie* is *Theorie*, and must, taken by itself, be *grau*, although life remains nevertheless always green, and is always the ultimate test of *Theorie*, I shall come to no harm ; and in the end even *Theorie* will lose its grey monotony for me, and will play its proper part in the harmony of our many-coloured life. But if I make the mistake of trying to divide that which is indivisible ; if I represent the indivisible duality of my experience by a fancied dualism of mind and body, or of objects real by themselves, and subjects easily dispensed with ; if I forget the source and meaning of all common knowledge of the experience of mankind ; and, finally, if I then set up the world of science as *the* real world apart and by itself ;—then I shall embark on a sea of paradoxical foolishness in which the lessons of my own experience must be lost. Need I do this ? Obviously not. Nothing is troublesome after this fashion, unless I take it for other than it is.

I owe this clearing up of difficulty in part to Professor Royce, and, above all, to Dr. James Ward's famous "Refutation of Dualism" in the second series of his Gifford Lectures. The following passage, which I shall quote from him, will go far to prove my debt :—

"It is not on the practical or historical side," he says, "that common knowledge conflicts with individual experience, for there the reference to individual subjects is still present and essential. But inter-subjective intercourse on what we may call the

theoretical side leads almost inevitably to the omission of this reference ; and so for the living green we have the sombre grey, and Man at least 'and nature are at strife.' "

I owe also to Dr. Ward that which may seem surprising to any one who has read or heard only his denunciation of naturalistic philosophising—I owe to him a new and more discriminating respect for the attainments of science as well as for its method. I know now that the schematic world of science is fully real, *while I take it for what it is.* I gild it now with the glory of Man, because it is his own and mine ; but I make no idol of it. The power to do this, to make needed distinctions and then let myself go in an admiration that is not idolatry, I owe almost entirely to Dr. Ward's instruction concerning the duality in unity of all experience in life, in contrast with a fancied dualism of separate and incommensurable body and mind, or subject and object capable of divorce.

I see for myself, now, a way of thinking in which the difficulty of conceiving the connection between pin-prick and pain-sensation, and between life and molecular change, is shorn of all inferential terrors. Undoubtedly, if we cling to any kind of scientific abstraction and see the disparateness and incommensurability of a "matter" that is exclusively physical, and a "mind" that is exclusively psychical—if we say to ourselves that "mind" and "matter" are mutually exclusive isolated things, as well as different in character and appearance, then there may very well be trouble about any hypothesis in which "mind" is

taken as either directing the motion of matter or in any way affecting its energy.

But if the dualism and mutual exclusiveness of "matter" and "mind," which I insist upon transcending as I write these words and bend material things to my purpose, are only affairs of a mere useful working hypothesis framed in relation to certain practical needs, the problem takes another look. If the unity-in-duality of experience tells truth, then "matter" and "mind" are merely convenient terms for differences that are not divided but united in my life. On the whole I appear to myself much more like "mind" containing "matter" (which is Professor Pearson's way of seeing me) than like "matter" containing "mind." But, in truth, I am neither one nor the other. I am a living man, whose predominant and most significant activity is centralising, directive, and selective, in a more or less manageable differentiated whole which has for me in the main and throughout rather what I must call a psychical than what I may call a physical character.

Therefore I have to give and take warning that when I employ the language used in scientific hypotheses and scientific generalisations and in everyday life to suggest, for example, that I *direct* or in any other way influence the energy of my body or my brain, I do not mean that my consciousness enters into a physical machine to derange its structure, or to become, or be fairly regarded as, mechanical itself and an element in that physical machine. I do not admit that there *is* a "physical

'machine.' The language I must use is tainted by dualism and cannot be brought into my purpose and meaning without trailing behind it clouds of dimness and confusion. This is a very serious difficulty; it hampers all efforts to speak of the duality-in-unity of life, and it has not a little to do with the plausibility of many attempts to escape from the consequences of dualism without overcoming that initial error.

There are, of course, certain well-known schemes of scientific men, which are not of their science but of their philosophy, wherein attempts are made to overcome it without acknowledging psychical primacy. Of these Haeckel's neutral monism is most widely talked about. His scheme, like the rest of its family tribe, is cursed at birth because the common ancestor of the tribe is scientific abstraction. Haeckel tries to overcome the primæval curse by hypostatising the Missing Link between "matter" and "spirit," or "body" and "mind"; and so converts that *tertium quid* into a meta-physical and meta-psychical *substance* of which the psychical and the physical are aspects. The neutral monist makes his appearance upon the stage of thought like an acrobat on a wire; and he has equal difficulty in keeping his balance. He sways now to the "mind" side, now to the "body" side, is sometimes materialistic in attitude, sometimes spiritualistic; but the peril of the whole arrangement persists. Every neutral monist is bent upon joining two worlds that should never have been made two, except with frank acknowledgement of a temporary expedient. He joins them by

a trick, and then finds the trick difficult to keep up. But the best thing—and it is a very good thing—about neutral monism is this instability, because it tends always to pass onward into a spiritualistic form, or else backward and downward into materialism, wherein it meets with due disaster.

The bottom of the whole subject is, as Dr. Ward insists, that it is much truer to speak of the universe as a life than as either a mechanism or two mechanisms. Then, when we have done this, we may prudently recognise that it allows us to impose upon it for narrow practical purposes a mechanical interpretation. Within each man's own organic unity, I contend, is the corrective of this interpretation; there a higher manner of life at least seems to direct, more or less well, a lower; while the lower at least seems to communicate to the higher, more or less well, its value for the purposes and ends of the higher—and is itself, perhaps, thus in some measure and part fulfilled and harmonised within the whole. There seems to be difference and even strife, but never disruption, and the difference shows serial degrees within the conscious *process* which each man knows as his own.

I see only one right way out of the difficulty raised by scientific dualism and scientific laws, and the first steps in it are to find out how both come about, and then to act upon the discovery on the lines of recognition of an original duality in the oneness of experience. It is much easier to do this now than it was when I suffered from the materialistic *νόητον* *επόντον*. Indeed, it is not too much to say that at

that time I could not have made the first all-important discovery. Now there are books within the reach of the plainest, and even of the poorest man who reads at all, which will tell him of it. It is true that Dr. Ward's "Refutation of Dualism" is to be obtained only in his Gifford Lectures; but the substance of it is gradually soaking into the general literature of the subject, and, apart from this, not a few of the scientific men themselves are proclaiming more and more widely the nature and character of their method, and the logic of their science. It is not difficult now to pass very swiftly through a stage which detained me a long time; it is also not very difficult to escape from the passing attractions of a neutral monism which fails to take account of our own psychical primacy in the differentiated whole of our own life, and yet, in its very failure, points out a better way.

V

ACCORDING to Comte's "Law of the Three States," my pilgrimage from barbarism and my unfolding began where they should have finished. The three stages of my progress should have been as the three stages of man's advance from the barbarism of the race: first, the theological; second, the metaphysical; third, the positive, or, as we may say, the scientific. Dr. Bridges expounds in an illustration the principle I fail to exemplify.

"Take the phenomenon of the sleep produced by opium. The Arabs are content to attribute it to 'the will of God.' Molière's medical student accounts for it by a *soporific principle* contained in the opium. The modern physiologist knows that he cannot account for it at all. He can simply observe, analyse, and experiment upon the phenomena attending the action of the drug, and classify it with other agents analogous in character."

My first stage, the positive, brought me precisely to the position wherein I might "observe, analyse, and experiment" upon all things, and having ended—if I could live long enough—by classifying each and every thing, myself among them, "with other agents

analogous in character," I should thereby attain the goal of scientific striving in so far as aspiration and thought, and not mere powers in the practical life, were concerned. For my desirous heart this must be all ; and my desirous heart had so far developed as to feel it ^

"Like to the apples on the Dead Sea shore,
All ashes to the taste."

Difficult to hold in respect as this attitude of mine may seem to a fresh and enthusiastic student of science who has not learnt that he, too, is driven by his heart, even in and to the dryness of his science, I dare to assure him that there is only one way in which a man is safe from being compelled to it ; and that the way should not be *his* way. It is the way of levity, the way in which a man persistently says, "I don't care ;" which, as James says, "is for this world's ills a sovereign and practical anæsthetic." Only thus, and only if he can keep up the mood, is any man proof against the assaults of life and reality, against the pressure of his own experience ; and this is no way of final escape for the faithful student of science. Yet, if there is anything real in his experience, and if there is anything of which even the phenomena his science deals with are in fact *phenomena*—appearances ; if there is anything that *is*, as well as seems ; if the whole vast universe contains (or is contained by) any cause —any "eminent" and efficient cause—which is not merely a sequent or an antecedent event in a chain of the events of appearance ; if there is any enduring value, meaning, and purpose in things, in human life

and man's experience ; if there is any one of these treasures after which men seek and must seek,—surely every scientific student must know now that it is past scientific finding out. Herein lies the reasonableness of my discontent. The food that science proffers turns to bitterness in every man's mouth in the great adventures of his life. Longing eyes, hungry eyes, turn to that region which the scientific man calls metaphysical, in loss, in pain, at the coming of death, in face of love and beauty, even in face of truth, and the lack of truth. Here, too, even rationality supports the heart, for one of the most certain truths of reason is this, "that a rule of thinking which would absolutely prevent me from acknowledging certain kinds of truth if those kinds of truth were really there, would be an irrational rule." Life forces upon us questions that pierce and rend the "superficial film" of science. We cannot help philosophising well or ill, especially when things go very ill with us—but we rarely call it philosophising. I could not help it, even before things went ill with me. Curiously enough—or so the scientific enthusiast may say—curiously enough reason itself drove me. It was the reason, doubtless, of a man in whom *anima naturaliter philosophica* lurked, although as yet unseen ; so I went on easily and naturally towards the stage which Comte called metaphysical, but which I call philosophical—a larger word for a larger matter than Comte designed in his middle stage of man. Philosophy has her ways of criticism with science, with all knowledge and manners of knowing ; she is "epistemological," and so is critical of knowing ; she wields power extending

elsewhere than in her metaphysical inquiry—that vast and penetrative wondering of men. She may stand for the middle stage of my way, but she must do it in her fulness, for I owe to her criticism as much as I owe to her marvelling.

“Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy ?
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven ;
We know her woof, her texture ; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
Empty the haunted air, the gnomed mine—
Unweave a rainbow.”

Keats was English ; and Englishmen, according to Hegel, used to speak of philosophic hair-dressing. They still speak of philosophic instruments when they mean scientific, and such instruments may have been in Keats's mind when he brought this charge against divine philosophy, even although he set her in the person of Apollonius, who was no scientific man. If it were not so, he was guilty of the exaggeration which “paints a snake and gives it legs.” The philosophic serpent may be a spirit that doubts, and in so far may sometimes “empty the haunted air,” when the haunting is by unsubstantial ghosts ; but it has no rule and line. Measuring, weighing, classifying, are scientific, not philosophic processes ; the “what,” the “who,” the “whence” and the “whither” of all measured and unmeasurable things make the province of philosophy's discourse, and those questions evade every such instrument of the scientific trade.

I am myself a ghost companying with a ghost, and I carry about a protoplasmic skeleton ; but it is not philosophy that empties my haunted air, it is the science that makes of me the shadow of my skeleton.

Philosophy's business lies with me as a ghostly whole and with the meaning of my skeleton for me ; real ghosts are in its province, such ghosts as I and my Companion. Real skeletons, too, it deals with, and real worlds. Nevertheless, Keats is right, in a way, for divine philosophy is human and must cut and carve reality to shape for handling. It is a philosopher, Royce, who says concerning this

"The truth is indeed concrete. But if *alle theorie* is, after all, *grau* and *grün des Lebens goldner Baum*, the philosopher, as himself a thinker, merely shares with his colleague, the mathematician, the fate of having to deal with dead leaves and sections torn or cut from the tree of life, in his toilsome effort to make out what the life is."

Therefore, philosophy perhaps needs to "clip an angel's wings" that she may bring him under a human roof-tree ; but she is more likely than science to leave with us still the vision of an angel in the heavenly air. She will not substitute a balloon, or a scheme of vanes and wheels ; she will never classify the angel as a flying machine. She looks deeper, she looks beyond, and she may even catch glimpses of celestial purpose. At least she will treat her angel as a winged whole, even if she must, for her moment, strip him of his pinions that he may stay awhile with men.

Thus, too, she treats me and my world. It is

small wonder that I felt myself in a larger air when I set myself to learn of her.

Yet it is true, it remains true, and will be true for ever, that "thought of itself leads nowhere, but blows the perfume from every flower, and cuts the flower from every tree, and hews down every tree of the valley, and in the end goes to and fro in waste places —gnawing itself in a last hunger," which is the end of the philosopher who will never be more than philosopher. It is true, and blessedly true—this end of a last hunger; if it were not so, men would blight and wither in the glamour of fair thought, unable to find out that which they had not done, and discover that which they had lost.

"Philosophy," says Novalis, "is properly homesickness," and her failure may lead on towards a supreme success. I did not know this when my Shadowy Companion compelled me to follow the stony track which "the masters of those who know" had laid down for my feet. I did not know it until I came to the end of the track, the place where it makes a little turn upon itself—a doubling which the philosopher *pur sang*, whose eyes are either on the path or in the clouds, may never notice. I, not being a philosopher, had more than his advantages, and so my eyes wandered, and home-sickness, which science had stirred up in my desirous heart, revealed itself for what it was. The cobbler sticks to his last at the peril of his soul when he ignores a desirous heart, which the philosopher must always strive to do as philosopher, and not man.

I began the stony philosophic track with Spencer,

as was natural enough. I owe him much. I learnt from him the weakness of the agnostic position ; I learnt to leave him for better philosophers. Idealist *malgré lui*, he sent me to the idealists. When he had taught me that "the Power manifested throughout the universe distinguished as material is the same power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness," where else could I reasonably go along the philosophic road ? I, like my teacher, felt what he spoke of as a "necessity we are under to think of the external energy in terms of the internal energy." In other words, I was driven by him who was himself driven almost to an alien position, and I had to acknowledge that his "First Principles," if pushed to a legitimate conclusion, left me face to face with a universe possessed, as he said, of "rather a spiritualistic than a materialistic aspect," a universe, in fact, curiously like myself. Unlike my guide, I went on in the way towards which he pointed.

Herbert Spencer stands out as one of the most pathetic products of the latter-day Aufklärung. He had the dry aloofness of a man almost without spirit ; but the spirit was strong within him—waiting, I suppose, its hour ; and it sometimes spoke. In his later years, though he still remained agnostic, he moved at least so far as to lose his hostility to those who could not stand side by side with him. In his autobiography he says—

"I have come more and more to look calmly on forms of religious belief, to which I had, in earlier days, a pronounced aversion. . . . Largely, however, if

not chiefly, this change of feeling towards religious creeds and their sustaining institutions has resulted from a deepening conviction that the sphere occupied by them can never become an unfilled sphere, but that there must continue to arise afresh the great questions concerning ourselves and surrounding things, and that, if not positive answers, then moods of consciousness standing in place of answers, must ever remain. . . . Religious creeds, which in one way or another occupy the sphere that material interpretation seeks to occupy and fails the more, the more it seeks, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need, feeling that dissent from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found."

This is Spencer's pathetic way of saying that he recognises in religion a real expression of the Will-to-live, with its demand for the endurance of life's values, a persisting expression towards the full recognition of which his philosophy trends, but does not reach. If he could have trusted the whole of himself as he trusted a part he would have lived more and taught better. Nevertheless he directed me on a good way; and in following the clue he put into my hands and leaving his philosophy for one more ample, I took many steps upon the road that passes through philosophic idealism to religion.

I went on first to Thomas Hill Green, and he completed in me the work that Spencer had begun. The scientific men had suggested, as I have pointed out, that consciousness in me—ghost, in fact—might be a product of my skeleton, or body. It might be

regarded as the whistle to the engine, "a foam, aura, or melody" of the mechanism, or a shadow, or an epiphenomenon,—all these words were proffered me ; and at best there was the concession that I might for practical purposes look upon the ghostly mind and skeleton body as marching side by side, doing of complacency and for my bewilderment the same things at the same time with equal step by step, in two wholly unconnected yet inseparable ways. Psycho-physical parallelism was the scientific ultimatum to my desirous heart, and it was obviously an economic expedient and no more. The drift of the whole inquiry in science was mechanical—that was plain.

"Earth goes by chemic forces ; Heaven's
A Mécanique Céleste !
And heart and mind of human kind
A watch-work as the rest."

But Spencer, with his "infinite and eternal Energy from which all things proceed," the same as that "which wells up in ourselves in the form of consciousness," plainly overpassed the watch-work view ; and he had sown in me a suspicion to match a rising hope that I was not a product of material "Kraft und Stoff." My hope and my suspicion were confirmed by Green.

From him I learnt, as many other men have learnt, that the knower cannot be *merely* a product of the "nature" which it knows and constitutes as known. I, for whom and in whom things come and go, cannot be wholly of the coming and going things.

“In a man who can know a nature—for whom there is a ‘cosmos of experience’—there is a principle which is not natural, and which cannot without a *υτερον πρότερον* be explained as we explain the facts of nature.”¹

Much more, but to the same effect, I learnt concerning myself as primarily ghost and only secondarily flesh and bones. In consequence I found myself after all, evolutionist though I was, on the side of the angels and in company with Disraeli, although not after his manner nor after the manner of my old borderland friends. Here is a passage from Green, recorded in a long-ago note-book of mine, which shows my manner of accepting the angels at this stage of my progress—

“That countless generations should have passed, during which a transmitted organism was progressively modified by reaction on its surroundings, by struggle for existence, or otherwise, till its functions became such that an eternal consciousness could realise or reproduce itself through them—this might add to the wonder with which the consideration of what we do and are must always fill us, but it could not alter the results of that consideration.”

This passage stands as a tablet commemorating my continued fidelity to the principles of the “Origin

¹ It is well to remember, in considering the lessons I learnt from Green, that he used the terms “nature” and “natural” in the sense of his materialist opponents, meaning a nature which is “a mere manifold of bodies and occurrences.” In this sense a self-conscious, self-realising subject of experience must be “super-natural.”

of Species." Green had given, but he had not taken away. He had taught me that the angels and the apes might both be of my kin. "*L'homme n'est ni ange ni bête*," says Pascal; I began to see that I might be the meeting-point of both, a place of union in the universe of things.

My philosophic enterprise afterwards passed beyond the point of vantage to which Green had led me; but undoubtedly he gave me something of a Pisgah-sight which I still retain. No man can take from me the conviction that "nature in its reality, or in order to be what it is, implies a principle which is not natural," and that a "*process of change*," which nature is, cannot be the sole source of a "*consciousness of change*." This was my point of vantage in the middle eighties, and that which it revealed is mine still. My book—still my book, although at this turn of the road nearer the bottom of my pilgrim-sack—had told me wonderful things of the natural process of change, its manner and means; it had even given hints of drama, meaning, purpose—a "*larger teleology*"—if one chose to be fanciful and "*anthropomorphic*" enough to take them up. But it left untouched the matter of my *awareness* of the natural change and process, and my own selective, directive, "*anthropomorphic*" powers. Therefore at my new point of vantage, whence I surveyed myself as the Magician of Mind, I found indeed a Pisgah-sight which I can never forget. But I had to go on, and first to other philosophers. I learnt from some of them to see more of what I must mean for myself as Magician—as effective Person, in fact. I learnt too

that although I am a person I am an exceedingly incomplete sort of person, and that certain words of nonsense which I had uttered concerning the absurdity of attributing personality to "God, if there be a God," came of the fancy that *I* set the standard, so to speak, of personality—*I*, who in truth am crawling along the ages and through the social worlds in search of it.

"In point of fact," said Lotze, in words that have since become almost too hackneyed for quotation, "we have little ground for speaking of the personality of finite beings; it is an ideal, which . . . appertains to us only conditionally and hence imperfectly. . . . Perfect Personality is in God only; to all finite minds there is allotted but a pale copy thereof: the finiteness of the finite is not a producing condition of this Personality, but a limit and a hindrance of its development."

This passage, too, I find in an old note-book. My record of it marks, I think, among many other things, a beginning of reverence in me, the reverence which few men can pay to a mere "Energy from which all things proceed," a "Tendency not ourselves," a "Power beyond phenomena," or "Will-to-live," but only to a Person for the naming of whom, if one likes, one may fitly use the abused and sacred name of God.

"Philosophy," says Novalis, "can bake no bread; but she can procure for us God, freedom, immortality. Which, then, is more practical, philosophy or economy?" Which, say I, is the further stage of man's way—the manner of thought for which no

reality can be alien and no vision too good to be true ; or the manner which classifies "agents analogous in character," and shuts out those that have no "natural" analogues and are the more precious, the more significant, for life ? I owe to philosophy at least the beginnings, or the needed starting-point, of my own belief in God, freedom, immortality ; and I deem the philosophic manner a right advance upon, and a correlative and corrective of, the scientific manner ; although neither in this manner nor in that do all men find that which I have found. The "reed that thinks" must think in many ways, to follow the many ways of life ; and it is no reproach to any way that alone it cannot bring him to a sight of the many aspects of truth ; nor should it be a reproach to philosophy that her revelations are more diverse and apparently discordant than those of science. Of necessity this is so, because her subject-matter is reality—the whole complex of individual and social experience in height and depth and breadth ; while that of science is the surface, the "phenomenal aspect" of our "natural" world. The greater the enterprise, the greater likelihood of failure for us who as yet are so far from our own greatness. There is no enterprise, except one, as vast and dangerous as the philosopher's. The enterprise more dangerous still, and illimitably vast, is the enterprise of living a man among men, an enterprise no man can escape.

All the great problems of human life are philosophical problems ; but they are also practical and inevitable.

"What do you think of yourself? What do you think of the world?" says FitzJames Stephen. "These are questions with which all must deal as it seems good to them. They are riddles of the Sphinx, and in some way or other we must deal with them. . . In all important transactions of life we have to take a leap in the dark. . . If we decide to leave the riddles unanswered, that is a choice; if we waver in our answer, that, too, is a choice; but whatever choice we make, we make it at our peril. If a man chooses to turn his back altogether on God and the future, no one can prevent him; no one can show beyond reasonable doubt that he is mistaken. If a man thinks otherwise and acts as he thinks, I do not see that any one can prove that *he* is mistaken. Each must act as he thinks best; and if he is wrong, so much the worse for him. We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there is any right one. What must we do?"

At least we should not stand still; nor should our advance be more blind than we cannot help its being. As far as our sight will carry it should go. That is the word of the philosopher; and I, who have learnt much from the philosophers, even presume to bring into my ways of doing and my ways of seeing, matters as yet unsystematised in most philosophies. For example, where the philosopher of most philosophies stops short at *the Absolute*, I go on to *God*; although I know that the philosopher's Absolute is neither his God nor mine. The Absolute may be necessary to a philosopher as mere philosopher, God

is necessary to me ; and I venture to assert that He is necessary to every philosopher too, if he is to see how the values of life may be conserved for him.

The philosopher may draw very near to the whole man in his way of seeing all things, much nearer than does the scientific man ; but Leslie Stephen, the Agnostic, says that if we once admit that the mind can reason about the Absolute and the Infinite (as all philosophers do), we shall get "to the position of Spinoza, or to a position substantially equivalent." By this he means pantheism ; and from the agnostic position he charges philosophy (as well as theology) with the crime of issuing logically in pantheism. This is precisely what I found in experience. When I was trying to philosophise, following humbly the philosophic track, I drew nearer and nearer to pantheism. When I came to the turn at the end of my track I was, in fact, a Pantheist ; but when I lifted my eyes I found God not only looking through my eyes, but looking into them. There I did more than philosophise : the philosopher *pur sang* does not lift his eyes, nor, as philosopher, meet the eyes of God.

Perhaps I should correct myself here in regard to pantheism and say that until these last few years what Sir Leslie Stephen said of the philosophers continued to be true ; but that a change has begun among them with the uprising of the new conception of a "Pluralist Absolute." There are philosophers now who no longer confine their outlook to an all-inclusive Unitary Absolute, but conceive instead a Divine City of a multitude of Divine Citizens. I

(again let me say), not being a philosopher, thankfully, if with daring, accept both conceptions to transform and accommodate them. I look now for a Divine City which hath foundations ; and I do not forget that a pluralist conception of God and man is no novelty among religious men. I remember also certain wonderful words : "I pray that they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . And the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one."

But there is a great work for the thinkers of this coming time in clearing up the confusion between God and the Absolute, and so showing, *inter alia*, the right place of pantheism. Dr. James Ward puts it that "there is still much to do in differentiating the conception of God, to which experience directly leads, from the conception of the Absolute which belongs entirely to philosophical speculation" ; and he says that "this will be *the* problem of the twentieth century." It sounds unpractical—this problem ; but it is not. The difference between God and the Absolute is one of the most practical of all differences, and affects profoundly both that conduct which, as Matthew Arnold says, makes up three-fourths of life, and our conception of the values of all life.

Nevertheless the advance from a scientific position in which there is only a belief in an assumed "unifying ground" of things, to one in which the conception of the Absolute has a rational place, is great and significant. From that it is but a step, as Sir Leslie Stephen said, to pantheism ; and in pantheism it is

not very easy for a Western mind to remain, at least consistently with practical life, because Western practical life implies in every stage of it a conception of man and of the world different from that which the consistent Pantheist must hold. This causes us to look for a different manner of the conservation of life's values, and therefore leads to a different, although not incompatible, religion, and a different, but inclusive rather than incompatible, God.

VI

I HAD reached a point where it seemed ridiculous to think of myself any longer as agnostic in the popular sense, although I was, and am still, agnostic in another sense. Where and what was I ? I remember asking myself this question, surveying my pilgrim-road along past years, wondering what there might be to come, knowing well only one thing—that the road was not at an end. I remember asking myself whether there was any banner under which I might enlist to find company by the way, any pilgrim band that I might join. I felt the need of companionship—I had felt it often before, but my body had never wholly left the borderland, only my soul had gone on pilgrimage, an adventurous soul forced to find friends in books and with itself ; my inner life had been abnormally solitary. I think it is to my credit and the credit of my caution that I had never enlisted under any banner in my earlier stages ; I had always known myself vagrant on a way leading me to an unknown goal, and thought myself best alone. Many a pilgrim's pilgrimage comes to an early end through joining some camping party too well content to travel on. I had spared myself this cutting-short.

Now I looked around for a banner. My road seemed to have come to a great open space with occupation in it enough for all my strength; so in this space I sought for men of like mind with me. I did not find them then, and I think it was well, for suddenly, quite suddenly, there opened out before me a new turn of my widened road, and I discovered round the bend the next thing for me, another "shining star," a volume of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* containing an account of some of Professor Oliver Lodge's experiments in "the communication of mind with mind otherwise than through the recognised organs of sense." It was an odd volume, but before I had finished it I bought the rest of the set. Then I joined the Society in gratitude and expectation. It had no banner, but it had a profession—that of the scientific method—with which it proposed to explore a region ordinarily left in native savagery, and believed by most scientific men to be a No-true-man's Cloud-Cuckoo-Land.

My respect for the scientific method was undiminished, and I desired ardently to find some way by which what I heard from the philosophers could be worked up to, as it were, more fully than it had been previously, in the scientific manner and according to the canons of the scientific method. The desert between science and philosophy was wide, but I did not desire to ignore it and rest content in either fertile land; I wished to be able to see it lessening, to discern an encroaching on it giving place for hope that in some future time, when men's minds should have larger scope, they might gain grasp of a larger

truth, new power through methods meeting together, and a new continent of knowledge wherein science and philosophy would foregather on new terms of harmony.

The Society for Psychical Research first taught me that Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, lying desert-like under the eyes of all in all times, Cloud-Cuckoo-Land with its vultures and its foolish fowl—"feather-headed birds, once solid men"—promised conjunction of many roads of search and wandering.

Scientific men are unexpectedly like other men. The history of their obstinacy, their untimely obscurantism, their perverse refusals to distinguish hawk from hernshaw, is as the history of like traits in common men. The contemporary astronomers were of one mind with the ecclesiastics concerning Galileo and Jupiter's moons; they refused to see them through his telescope, because, as a matter of fact, Jupiter, they knew, possessed no moons. For a like reason—because there were no stones in the sky—Lavoisier refused to accept evidence that stones had fallen from the sky; and in the sixties most biologists were incapable of using Darwin's facts and reasoning to any biological purpose. As Huxley said, "There is not the slightest doubt that if a general council of the Church scientific had been held at that time, we should have been condemned by an overwhelming majority." They are as other men, these experts in science; and, like other men, they hate above all things, as Huxley pointed out to them, the necessity of revising their convictions.

Concerning Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, their convictions

were grounded, so it seemed, upon a rock. Chimeras and harpies preyed there upon the feather-headed folk, as they had preyed in every place and time and people during the long ages of mankind ; and when the scientific members of the Society for Psychical Research put up the plea of Cromwell, and besought their brethren to think it possible that they might be wrong, they pleaded at first in vain. But the Wheel of Change has moved, as it always moves, and already it is halfway towards reversal of the old prejudiced and superstitious judgement concerning the powers of personal life. In text-books of psychology things may be read now that five-and-twenty years ago would have been considered fit for Bedlam. The newspapers and the novelists juggle with telepathy and hypnotism ; whole schools and sects riot in the possibilities and improbabilities of "the sub-liminal consciousness ;" but here and there a sober scientific man is working hand in hand with a sober philosopher, while between them the desert is beginning here and there to blossom like the rose of knowledge which sober men may let themselves enjoy.

It is full time that scientific men in general should take up more of their share in this part of the burden of the whole man. A similar arbitrary limitation of the field of science has always been the wonder of times that followed after. In 1890 Professor James published a warning to the scientific men of our own day, couched in these words :—

"When from our present advanced standpoint we look back upon the past stages of human thought, whether it be scientific thought or theological thought,

we are amazed that a universe which appears to us of so vast and mysterious a complication should ever have seemed to any one so little and plain a thing. Whether it be Descartes' world or Newton's, whether it be that of the materialists of the last century or that of the Bridgewater treatises of our own, it always looks the same to us—incredibly perspectiveless and short. Even Lyell's, Faraday's, Mill's, and Darwin's consciousness of their respective subjects are already beginning to put on an infantile and innocent look. Is it then likely that the science of our own day will escape the common doom; that the minds of its votaries will never look old-fashioned to the grandchildren of the latter? It would be folly to suppose so. Yet if we are to judge by the analogy of the past, when our science once becomes old-fashioned it will be more for its omissions of fact, for its ignorance of whole ranges and orders of complexity in the phenomena to be explained, than for any fatal lack in its spirit and principles. The spirit and principles of science are mere affairs of method; there is nothing in them that need hinder science from dealing successfully with a world in which personal forces are the starting-point of new effects. The only form of thing that we directly encounter, the only experience that we concretely have, is our own personal life. The only complete category of our thinking, our professors of philosophy tell us, is the category of personality, every other category being one of the abstract elements of that. And this systematic denial on science's part of personality as a condition of events, this rigorous belief that in its own essential and innermost nature our world is a strictly impersonal world, may, conceivably, as the whirligig of time goes round, prove to be the very defect that our descendants will be most surprised at in our own boasted science, the omission that to their eyes will most tend to make it perspectiveless and short."

74. AN AGNOSTIC'S PROGRESS

Since this warning was published much has been done to remove its reproach, and the scientific climate is now more favourable to psychical investigation than it has ever been before ; but its effects upon scientific men generally are still barely to be discerned.

I remember well my first conversation with the late Frederic Myers ; I remember telling him that the Society was bringing back to me my old delight in the working of the scientific method, and something of my old hopefulness. Research into "the constitution and course of [physical] nature," I told him, had proved barren of the fruit for which I hungered ; deeper research into the constitution and course of man not only promised in the future, but had, it seemed, already produced in the present something to assuage my craving. I trusted then (and I still trust) the method, as did he ; he and I both rejoiced in that the new field, unworked before, had in this short time come to productivity. He said that he had despaired while watching the continued scientific advance over external nature, the magnificent conquering results achieved there. He, too, hungered ; he, too, failed to see in that direction the likelihood of any food for the mind such as he desired. Now he was full of hope and even of assurance. This interview took place, I think, in 1885. It was in 1886 that the greatest psychological discovery of our day was made. I quote here James's well-known words concerning it :—

"I cannot but think," he says, "that the most important step forward that has occurred in psychology since I have been a student of that science is the

discovery, first made in 1886, that, in certain subjects at least, there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field, with its usual centre and margin, but an addition thereto in the shape of a set of memories, thoughts, and feelings which are extra-marginal and outside of the primary consciousness altogether, but yet must be classed as conscious facts of some sort, able to reveal their presence by unmistakable signs. I call this the most important step forward because, unlike the other advances which psychology has made, this discovery has revealed to us an entirely unsuspected peculiarity in the constitution of human nature. No other step forward which psychology has made can proffer any such claim as this."

For myself, I compare this discovery, as to importance and far-reaching influence, with the discovery of the radio-activity of matter, made only the other day. Our view of the constitution and course of physical nature is being changed by this latter ; but not more than our view of man is being changed by the former. Could any professor of psychology, even Professor James, have written the following passage before that former discovery was made ?

"The further limits of our being plunge, it seems to me, into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely 'understandable' world. Name it the mystical region, or the supernatural region, whichever you choose. So far as our ideal impulses originate in this region (and most of them do originate in it, for we find them possessing us in a way for which we cannot articulately account), we belong to it in a more intimate sense than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong

in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong. Yet the unseen region in question is not merely ideal, for it produces effects in this world. . . . The whole drift of my education goes to persuade me that the world of our present consciousness is only one out of many worlds of consciousness that exist, that those other worlds must contain experiences which have a meaning for our life also; and that although in the main their experiences and those of this world keep discrete, yet the two become continuous at certain points, and higher energies filter in."

In the great work of the exploration of man science has a place which nothing else can fill. Philosophy is indispensable, but science must provide philosophy with data, with material to work upon; and in this matter of the study of the knower as he may be known, her method is bringing forth already great results, revealing wonders such as her study of the merely known in physical nature has never produced.

I am well aware that there are many scientific men who not only stand aloof from this work, but will not even look at it to see what has been done by others; but I am also aware that there are not a few, and an increasing number, who are not of this narrowly pedantic mind. Slowly but very surely truth is prevailing, and the weight of accumulating evidence is making itself felt. Darwin's work met with no better welcome from the scientific generation of its day; and it came with far better credentials. Keferstein spoke of it as "the dream of an after-dinner nap;" and Haeckel says that when he first openly advocated Darwin's theory at a scientific

congress at Stettin in 1863, he was almost alone, and was blamed by the great majority for taking up seriously "so fantastic a theory." The great majority can say no worse of the work of "psychical researchers."

I myself owe to psychical research, conducted on scientific lines, a great personal debt. It helped me to a firmer grip on the meaning of my philosophers and of my philosophically-conceived self; but it did far more, as it has done for other men who have been more deeply, more publicly and professionally, and in reputation, pledged to opposed convictions on the most important problems of real life. I had to begin the revision of all those problems; I began to review what I knew and what I did not know—by far indeed the larger part—concerning religion. "*Qui veut guérir l'ignorance, il faut le confesser;*" confession was wrung from me at last. Facing these new revelations I saw that in "God, freedom, immortality," there must be depth of meaning to which so far I had been blind. I learnt in the end—still far off then—that

"as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale,"

so in that volume of dull, patient psychical experiments, and in the discovery of the "extra-marginal" consciousness, there lay great romantic things for my desirous and neglected heart.

Great things were happening in me, great, gradual changes. My eyes were clearing. If you like, I was a chicken chipping the shell, a puppy at the ninth

day. In the year 1888 my Shadowy Companion took advantage of the psychological discovery of that region wherein he habitually dwells, and whence he issues his persuasions and commands, to present himself to my deliberate notice. He came at first delicately, unobtrusively, as one willing but not presumptuous or pressing; and later, when his welcome was assured, more persistent. Now he is my familiar friend and sometimes master, no longer fearing, I suppose, that spirit of the *Ausklarung* of the sixties which would have sent him back to Cloud-Cuckoo-Land as a skiagrammatic folly unlawfully abroad.

I had much to learn before my ghost and I settled down together on these friendly terms; and I have still much to tell concerning the process of my learning; but I may as well say now once for all that his intercourse with me is ever orderly, like myself, and altogether without those sudden irruptions to which Socrates, for great example, was subject at the will of his Familiar. I am—need I say it?—no genius; and I am informed that it is the Shadowy Companion of a genius, whether of high rank or of low, who has the marvel-producing faculty, not he who companies with safe, intelligent mediocrity like mine. Day by day and year by year I gain upon my ghost, I overtake him and appropriate him; and day by day and year by year he shows me a vista of himself beyond, but never as the Dæmon of genius. He is a plain man's ghost, and he knows his place and keeps it. At times I have wished it otherwise; I have tried to rouse him to “automatic” violence,

• but I have failed ; I take it that he knows best. Geologically speaking, he deposits my sandstone grain by grain, and upheaves no fire-formed columns, no many-coloured granite peaks, such as I see elsewhere.

When my resistance to definite religion began to break down beneath the weight of new psychological considerations, he—my Shadowy Companion—pressed its claims upon me, pleading with me to distinguish hawk from hernshaw, and to find out whether the desirous heart in me could be satisfied without reproach. I admitted to myself that there was within me a certain spiritual hunger, an emptiness which I did not know how to fill. I thought it not unlikely that the Shadowy Companion might in this respect, as in others, know more of the meaning of my inchoate wants than I. I admitted also to myself that although I had investigated and rejected the claims of Christianity as a dogmatic system, it was quite possible, it was even probable, that the newly-wonderful being, Man, who evidently possessed powers, resources, perhaps alliances, to which it was very difficult, *a priori*, to set a limit, might have possessed himself of important religious truths for the most part hidden under a mask of superstition. It might well be, in fact, that he had not for these thousands of years been religious man in vain.

So I began, as I have already said, to reconsider my attitude towards religion ; and in that reconsideration my heart awoke, and my growing recognition of great claims upon me spoke in it words I had never heard before ; and my unfolding

soul gathered strength and form and colour. I saw that, as Goethe says, "few men have imagination enough for the truth of reality," especially a reality so incomplete and imperfect, so magnificent, far-reaching, potent, as is man.

VII

TEXT-BOOKS of psychology contain romance, demands upon imagination, visions of the marvels of reality, too dazzling, it seems, for common eyes to bear. Sometimes the writers of these books give way to their usually well-concealed enthusiasm, as Professor James does, when in his large two-volume work much used by students he bursts out with "Each of us dichotomises the Kosmos in a different place." Dichotomises the Kosmos ! Think of what that means. It is a quaint Greekish phrase, but it means that I, even I, am creator, and make for myself an ordered world—my own world and mine alone—out of an ordered universe of worlds proffered to me submitted for my consenting choice and my co-operation." It means that I overpass the visions of fairyland and am a magician greater than alchemists could dream.

It means, too, that when the Fellows of the Royal Society meet to discuss worlds, not one of them can show another the fulness of *his* world, and not one and not all can see any "world-in-itself." It means that when in justified triumph they have agreed upon the features of a common world, it is not one that

ever existed or shall exist in living reality ; it is a diagrammatic sketch of a world, without individual quality, meaning, purpose, or the sense and personal value of any world that really is for any individual man. This sketch of a world may be the valid and useful world of science ; but whatever it is, it is not a direct product of any individual man's dichotomy ; it is not even like an artist's picture of a real world ; it is a composite built-up scheme, wherein picture is superposed on picture and feature robbed from feature, until individual meaning and individual character are blotted out. Present to any lover a composite portrait scheme made from portraits of all the women in the world—black, white, yellow, old, young and middle-aged, good and bad—and ask him whether it may stand to his heart's eyes as the semblance of his beloved, and you will have the answer of each man to a like question concerning his unique real world as compared with any schematic world, however useful, that men agree to call *the* world and make a common world for all. They are conventions—these common worlds, and they have the uses, the value, and the reality, of conventions in the social body. But at the bottom of both the individual and the common worlds, giving each its peculiar validity, there is the great, the solemn and perturbing truth, that "each of us dichotomises the Kosmos in a different place." Goethe may well say that few men have imagination enough for the truth of reality.

The lover's vision of the beloved is the test of all philosophies, and the reproach of any science that

forgets itself in inferential dogma after its efforts to summarise the real. Reality will not be summarised without loss—the loss, indeed, of its chief life-pertinent and most far-reaching value." A summary of the women of the world may as well claim place in the lover's soul as the scientific summary may claim to supersede that which alone each man feels and knows and does, in exercising the individual human power which by its striving makes for him an ordered world charged with his quality, his meaning, his purpose, and—so I see now—his destiny.

Man is, indeed, the magician. What are those students about when they can read a text-book of psychology without leaving the floor in rapture and treading up-bearing air? As for me, when I had discovered the great fact I went about on air, hiding my rapture and my magician's wand, and hugging to myself my one and only world, of which no man could rob me, and which no number of men could interpret to my heart, or fully, even to my head. I had compassion on the poet and the painter, vainly endeavouring to show me their worlds; and I saw that there was nothing, nothing, that a man could not gild with his own glory, even if it were a collection of postage stamps, or the common world made in committee by scientific men. I once knew a man who told Mr. John Morley that he could not imagine why he—Mr. Morley—did not steal the spoons. If my friend had known that Mr. Morley and he dichotomised the Kosmos in a different place, and yet retained, each of them, the essential characters of a human being, he would have had less difficulty in

the matter of an agnostic's honesty. Each of us, if he allows himself, dowers his own Kosmos with graces and hails it with his own rapture. The moral law may well be worshipped and obeyed in any manner of disguise ; and for some men duty holds easily, up to a point, the place of love and a reverence-compelling God, and draws to itself their native rapture and the devotion of a compelling heart. My own first experience of rapture was drawn out by the first proposition in the first book of Euclid—a new world, a new, sublime, faultless world it seemed, and my whole little childish heart sang out to it in response. Perhaps a man's standing in the aristocracy or the proletariat of life might be tested by numbering his moments of rapture, of joy, however caused. "God," says a great mystic, "is Joy itself." Pleasure is no such test, pleasure is plainly of earth ; joy is of heaven, and satiety is of hell ; but these distinctions had not reached me when I learnt about dichotomising the Kosmos. They were still farther away when the odd volume of "Psychical Research" turned into a shining star ; but its dawning heralded them for me, and lighted my pilgrim-path towards even greater things. I began then, as I have already said, to reconsider the old questions of religion, but in a new way. A man whose soul is expanding, whose heart is daring to be openly desirous, whose Shadowy Companion is a bold presence, does not approach these questions like one whom the pale dry light leads. He is at a new advantage, he has discovered more of his own greatness ; he sees that

"La Raison a son ignorance ;
Son flambeau n'est pas toujours clair."

He will throw more of his greatness into the work ; he will leave behind the timidity mingled with rashness which is engendered by devotion to the dry light, when it is unaccompanied by stars of the heart, stars of the larger mind and soul. That "le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas" does not mean that reasons of the heart are not reasonable ; it means that reason without all the reasons of the whole heart is shorn of its rights and powers. A man has not a whole heart for nothing, nor a Shadowy Companion, and there are kingdoms of truth he cannot enter if they do not consent. The rationalising poet, the artist in whose depths no seer speaks, is a contradiction in terms, and beauty will hold her veil against such monstrosity. The man who faces truth not as a whole man but as chosen part of man finds chosen parts of truth, aspects, facets, of the many-sided whole which awaits his many-sided self. So it is with religion, and I came to know it. Truth began to slip her veil for me when I laid all my needs before her—the craving of my heart, the aspiration of my soul, and the enlarging demands of my divine reason, which only she could meet. There are many men alive now who can match the part of my history which immediately brought me to this point, and tell how tedious experiments in hypnotic suggestion and thought-transference, the dull collection and classification of physiological and pathological phenomena, puerile bits of chaotic-looking experience, the folklore of

savage tribes, the superstitions of our own forefathers and the anomalous results of our developed science in its application to bodies and minds, all united to make a new mental atmosphere and a new stand-point of critical judgement ; and lent to the religions of the world a new claim to be considered in new light. Myers, in his "Human Personality," has the following passage in relation to the event which St. Paul speaks of as that without which his preaching were vain,—the Resurrection of his Master :—

"I venture now on a bold saying ; for I predict that, in consequence of the new evidence, all reasonable men, a century hence, will believe the Resurrection of Christ, whereas, in default of the new evidence, no reasonable man, a century hence, would have believed it."

Think of Arthur Clough, of the difference all these things would have made to him. Think of him with his desirous heart, not daring to trust it for lack of the poor evidence, the dull stuff which I possess, "the plain eggs of the nightingale" out of which music has been made for me :—

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One, too !
This is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen !"

"As of the unjust, also of the just"—and since Clough wrote those sad words many of us have learnt, concerning the unjust and concerning the common life and common death of common men, to

reverse this heart-withering verdict of the judging mind. The mind judges still as Clough's mind judged, that in this matter there is one thing for all, but many of us see now that it is a more wondrous thing than ashes to ashes, a thing which points to the most wondrous manner of it in Him who is most wondrously the first-born among many brethren.

It is the same with the question of miracles. Matthew Arnold pointed out that "miracles do not happen;" we point out with equal decisiveness and greater cogency that miracles have always happened, and are happening every day. "Dost thou not see," says Carlyle, "that the true, inexplicable, God-revealing miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all, that I have free force to clutch aught therewith?" We are linking now with this everyday miraculous power of man the miracles of all the ages; and we have discovered in man's depths powers undreamt of, yet at work, which are the root and source of growing miracle, miracle of "just and unjust" and of God and man, miracle which sets in new light for us those which, as a matter of premature judgement by Arnold and the men of his generation, did not happen.

Hume's well-known definition of a miracle runs thus: "A transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity or the interposition of some invisible agent." But, as one of the Cambridge Essayists pertinently remarks:—

"If the nineteenth century contributed nothing else to this discussion, it did at least demonstrate the inadequacy of this definition. Nothing (at least

from the scientific point of view)," he goes on, "can be added to Huxley's trenchant criticism in chapter vii. of his 'Essay on Hume.' 'Nature,' to the man of science, 'means neither more nor less than that which is ; the sum of phenomena presented to our experience, the totality of events past, present, and to come. Every event must be taken to be part of nature until proof to the contrary is supplied. And such proof is from the nature of the case impossible."

If an event is an event, it is a natural event ; that is the summing-up of science. The scientific question as to a miracle is—Is it an event ? Did it, or does it, in fact, happen ?

"To sum up," says Huxley, "the definition of a miracle as a suspension or a contravention of the order of nature is self-contradictory, because all we know of the order of nature is derived from our observation of the course of events of which the so-called miracle is a part. On the other hand, no conceivable event, however extraordinary, is impossible ; and therefore, if by the term miracles we mean only 'extremely wonderful events,' there can be no just ground for denying the possibility of their occurrence."

This is, of course, the agnostic attitude towards miracles. I held it, and I hold it still ; but saying this I must also say that for me now God and man are natural, although they are supernatural in regard to the "nature," so-called, of bodies and occurrences in a scientific scheme. Their manner of working miracles appears ordinarily *as the manner of natural law* in the phenomenal realm, although they are above and beyond it. If I use the word miracle (as I must) I

use it (for myself) to indicate such efficiently causative operations of man as are involved in my giving purposive expression of my meaning in these written words, and in the ordinary presentation of myself in my bodily aspect here upon earth among my fellow-men. I use it also when I speak of the operation of God, the all-embracing efficient cause, of which all phenomena in their "natural" order seem to me effects ; but I do not use it when I speak with my scientific or plain fellows concerning this chain of mere antecedence and sequence which we observe and discuss scientifically, or speak of in ordinary everyday fashion. For the discussion of our knowledge of things that are in common and in science, I concede the whole chain of linked antecedents and consequents in "nature" as not only "natural" but non-miraculous ; but living experience—experience of the golden tree of life—I must call miraculous, provisionally and until all miracle shall be done away and God Himself be manifest as most natural. Herein I take part, as to the "naturalness" of the mere phenomenal aspect, with the scientific agnostic, for whom nature is "that which is ;" and "that which is" is nature. Indeed I do not differ from him except in my recognition of a larger "that which is," and in the inferences I draw from it. And obviously, if science has nothing to do with efficient cause, or with purpose and meaning and value, it has nothing to do—at present—with my miracles or with God's, seeing that its analysis is inadequate to reveal their *modus*, and deals only with the "natural" outward look of what is produced by the miracle-worker. I

believe that in the action of writing these words I am operating as an efficient cause, although a secondary and derived cause. I am really—so I think—giving a definite direction to the chain of phenomena involved in the appearance of these words, and am interfering by that action to produce a pattern of phenomena and convey a meaning through them, which would not have been produced and conveyed without my intervention as the wielder of power, and as the possessor of a purpose which these words of mine are definitely directed to fulfil. But, in doing this, I may possibly—so I dare to guess—even be adding to and subtracting from the “physical” energy of my “physical” system. Either this direction, or this possible contribution and withdrawal of energy, would be precisely what I mean by a miraculous interference; and where the Supreme Power does anything comparable to, however greatly exceeding, my directive action—to say nothing of any contributive or withdrawing operation—there I see a miracle of the first or originative order. The miracles of the working of my own power I see as of the second or derived order. The rest of the question of miracles and of the belief in miracles is for me a matter of evidence, and of the manner of reception of evidence—which depends on the state of the receiver. And the manner of speaking of the whole question is confused and made ridiculous by our dualism and by the necessity of using words accommodated to it and spoilt by it.

It is plain that if physical science can to its satisfaction study the chain of sequence in my organism

without any need to call *me* as efficient cause into discussion ; if it is possible for it to regard consciousness in me as only "a foam, aura, or melody" of my bodily mechanism, or as ineffectively accompanying it in its mechanical changes, without influencing them in any way ; if, in fact, I, in my conscious aspect, am a superfluity for physical science, a needless hypothesis, and even an obstacle to intelligence ;—then, "*Nullus in microcosmo spiritus, nullus in macrocosmo Deus,*" it is quite reasonable that God also must likewise be at best a superfluity and a needless hypothesis. While I am writing these words my organism passes through a sequence of changes which might conceivably, according to science, be analysed and stated fully in mechanical terms, although, *nota bene*, this has never been done in any such case. If it were done there would be displayed a long-drawn series of the plain man's causes and effects, changes which are neither causes nor effects for either the careful scientific man or the philosopher (except when they accommodate their speech to popular use) ; but there would be no efficient operative cause manifest anywhere—or so I maintain—to be laid hold of by the student occupied with such an analysis and such a conceptual reconstruction of my operations. On the other hand, I contend, the really complete analysis which has never been made might reveal in the very series itself perturbations for the production of which mechanical statements could not be found ; and these perturbations, though occurring within the chain, would—so I think—be produced by me after the manner of God, but secondarily and with a power

that is derived from God, and is employed by me to determine the right expression of my idea and my meaning and purpose.

For anything men of science know to the contrary there may be in living things a continual systole and diastole of modes of the universal power which are passing through, or rather ignoring, that imaginary wall which, as Tyndall said, divides, for the scientific dualist, "physical" events from "psychical" events, and cuts in two halves for him the being who knows himself in his experience as one, although dually one. I do not say that there is such a process ; but I say that science cannot disprove it, that there is no scientific evidence against it, and that it fits the facts of experience immeasurably better than the guess either that my mind is a tune played by my body, or the whistle shrieked incidentally by that engine ; or that it is secreted like bile ; or is a mind-machine running independently by the side of a body-machine, or—latest of all machine-guesses, the neutrally monistic one—that it is produced by the massing together and interacting of myriads of atoms of an unknown universal "*substance*," each atom possessing a mind-aspect and a body-aspect, the substance itself being unknown and inaccessible to knowledge, and the production by such a process of a *knower* of the whole affair being unthinkable. In the scientific study of my phenomenal bodily aspect it is surely right to shut out my ghost—my mind in all its dimensions—myself as cause, my purposes and meanings and personal values, and all the possibly accessible stores of power on the ghost-side of me ;

they would only confuse the scientific issue and baffle the explorer. In this restriction there is nothing necessarily misleading. Trouble arises only when the cobbler deserts his last, or when the unprofessional person picks it up in mistake for a flesh and blood foot..

The principle of the conservation of energy is supposed to preclude any operation of myself as efficient cause except an operation in which I am merely directive. But, as a matter of plain fact, the operations of physicists are so restricted that they do not know whether the total energy of the universe, or even of any system within it (for example, myself), which cannot be shut off from the rest, is or is not constant.

"If, in spite of this ignorance," says Dr. Ward, in his Gifford Lectures, "physicists assume that the total energy of the universe is constant, much as a Cheapside crossing-sweeper assumes the population of London to be, their only justification is its simplicity, and the sufficiency of this assumption for their purpose. But it is no more a necessity of thought than the assumption of the crossing-sweeper. And how often in the history of science have false and hasty assumptions been called axioms, only because they were simple and could not be proved?"

The principle of the conservation of energy is not axiomatic; it is only regulative. It makes a good working hypothesis of strictly limited applicability. It is great, it is valuable; but it does not touch the working of my miracles. Flagrantly, and in its face, I work them every day. And if I suppose that in

working them I do not transgress against it, if I suppose that in my miraculous operations I am only directing the course of change in the distribution of energy within my system, I do not thereby escape scientific condemnation. Sir Oliver Lodge blesses me, but other scientific men lay me under ban by means of the principle of the conservation of momentum ; or if this will not do, they find, or soon will find, something else. "The spirit of man," says Montaigne, "is a great worker of miracles ;" but when the scientific man looks into the miracles he himself is working, he finds his own part in them unintelligible. It is, apparently, scientifically impossible to pass from the movements of my pen to my awareness of those movements, and scientifically absurd to take account of my direction and inspiring of those movements to an end of which I am not only aware, but prophetically aware. Nevertheless, I go on writing, and go calmly in possession of my miracles before the whole scientific world ; while "God, if there be a God," is majestically in possession of His. God, too, is a superfluous hypothesis for science (although He is very near that "unifying ground" in which science rests its faith) ; and His miracles are unrecognisable, and always will be unrecognisable as miracles, through the scientific method. When they are sufficiently supported by evidence to be accepted as facts their phenomenal aspect will be as amenable to the scientific method as is my writing of these lines, but no more so ; and God's miracles will be as much emptied of God by people who are not looking for God and are not interested in finding

Him, as the changes of my body are, for the same people, emptied of me ; but they will be no more and with no greater finality emptied of Him than I am really and finally emptied of myself. As Mr. Boyce Gibson says—

"The thesis that mind cannot in any way determine material movements, that, as Dr. Sigwart puts it, 'we stand in no other relation to our bodies than to the motion of the fixed stars,' is one of the most extraordinary paradoxes that the wit of man has ever propounded."

The belief in miracles which I acquired in the closing eighties, and still retain, is bound up for me with the absurdity of this paradox. To sum up—I go so far as to hold that science has never yet offered one item of evidence showing that I—myself as efficient cause—do not habitually direct, or even add to and subtract from the quantity of, the energy in my own system in favour of my own interests ; and that God does not habitually both provide all the energy of the universe, and add to or take from it according to *His* interests, which are evidently not alike in, say, a steam-engine, and myself or any living thing. No "physiological balance-sheet" can possibly deal with my miracles, and no regulative principles can exclude the miracles of God.

Hence I am not greatly troubled—even on scientific grounds—by the bogey of these principles, when I consider my own miracles or the supreme miracles of God ; and I continue to think it not even improbable that those places of the phenomenal skin where we find what we call, *par excellence*, life, are

places where the skin is pervious to higher energies ; places where, as Professor James says, "higher energies filter in" to work everyday miracles in our everyday world, and on occasion, may be, miracles that are not everyday.

"When I was a child," says Dr. Ward, "my mind was much exercised because I could never find the beginning of a piece of string ; all the string I could get hold of had had the beginning cut off. I was in a fair way to conclude that string had no beginning, but that every piece was cut off another piece, in turn cut off another, and so for ever. But one day, passing a rope-walk, there, to my delight, I saw string emerging from a bundle of tow that was not string at all. Now, Naturalism seems to have taken up a position analogous to that into which I was lapsing, and unfortunately there is no such easy way of escape. Naturalism reduces phenomena ultimately to motions determined by other motions, and so without end. It sees in the world but a variegated tapestry of illimitable extent, the warp and woof of which are motions. Keeping to the facts discernible from its standpoint, it fails, either by observation or experiment, to discover new threads entering the fabric ; then, turning to ideas, it devises a descriptive scheme, according to which such entry is inconceivable. Yet its 'day of Damascus,' to use a phrase of Du Bois-Reymond, might any time have dawned upon it, as it did half dawn upon him. The simple reflexion that the *facts* before it could never establish a negative ; and again, that ideas or theory must conform to facts, not facts to theory—such reflexions, I say, would have sufficed to show that the determination of motion otherwise than by antecedent motion is in itself neither impossible nor absurd. Then, with the scales of prejudice thus far cleared from its eyes,

• the one plain fact of voluntary activity might have been welcomed as a truth instead of being scouted as an illusion.”

“The universal course of things,” says Lotze, “may at every moment have innumerable beginnings whose origin is outside it.”

Once allow that *I* work miracles, that otherwise than by antecedent motion *I* determine motion, and the way is open for all the wonders of God to reach our souls. There comes to every man one message—

*“This main miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.”*

VIII

WITH much effort I threw off the once fashionable conception of life as a product of mechanism and therefore bound up with the fate of mechanism. I saw the colourless neutrality of the hypothesis of the mere precise parallelism of psychical processes with physical processes, each neither affecting nor being affected by the other. But the bogies of these guesses haunted my path. Sometimes they hovered in weak moments before my own eyes, more often they were proffered me as substantial in other men's. They were not effectually exorcised as long as I had nothing definite to occupy their place, no guess to proffer in my turn to those other men as being at least as good as theirs.

Only within the last decade did I discover that a transmissory hypothesis of life and matter was being put forward. In this we have new guesses on a new plan. The brain was in my young days, as I have said, either that which secreted mind "as the liver secretes bile"—the coarsest of materialistic guesses—or it worked by itself as a machine, and the mind worked also by itself as another machine, one physical, the other psychical; or it was a mind-shadow

producer. In the new guess the brain is a place where, to speak figuratively, the matter-skin of things is more or less translucent, and admits the light of an intelligent and purposive being to pass through that it may work in, and be worked upon by, things in a material world. A material brain is a condition of a man's effective appearance in the world, but not a condition of his effective existence or his appearance in any kind of world. It is useful, in fact, but not essential. This is at least as valuable a statement, even in its figurative form, as Huxley's, which compelled him to admit "the banishment from all regions of human thought and activity of what we call spirit and spontaneity," and it is at least as easy to maintain. It is unspeakably more fruitful. It gives room for all the influence of "body" upon "mind" which we experience. It fits far better with our experience in other ways. But it is only a guess among guesses—a symbolic or figurative guess, like other worse guesses.

Nevertheless its existence is of great significance ; its character is due to a change in the direction of our exploratory attention, a change which has taken place gradually within my very interesting lifetime. All life and mind, from being at best scientific "epiphenomena" of secondary importance when I was young, have become now, for many thinkers and workers (for the most part, I confess, outside the strict inner ring of scientific orthodoxy), of the very first place as facts and in their significance. Above all, man and the mind of man stand out for such men as of pre-eminent import ; and in many departments

of serious thought and reflexion we tend, in consequence, towards a "humanist" position. Some of us, indeed, are less in danger from materialism or mechanical ways of picturing the world and ourselves than from the opposed extreme. So far has the pendulum swung in some places. It is always thus; popular movements exaggerate those of careful thinkers; guesses are crystallised into theories, and theories become superstitious dogmas. The worst enemy the careful thinker has is the careless enthusiast on his own side. Have I not seen it, over and over again, in the course of my pilgrimage?

But this new guess would have helped me substantially in my troubles concerning the question of immortality, a question I cannot pass over because it is always a question that should be burning even when, as in many places now, it smoulders or seems gone out.

Had I been able, in an earlier stage, to find reasons for thinking that "a mind is the consciousness of that transcendent Being whose phenomenon is the mind's body," the story of my pilgrimage would have been very different; but at my lowest, nothing ever quenched my interest in this question as other influences have quenched the interest of numbers of men in our present day. I had no very strong desire for immortality; but I grew gradually into a belief amounting to assurance that if life that had reached the human height ended with this earthly phase the whole human experience was absurd, its meaning and values could not be conserved, and the scheme of things was irrational from futile beginning

to disastrous end. "If God," says Plutarch, "make so much of creatures in whom there is nothing permanent He is like women who sow the seeds of plants in soil within an oyster-shell." I held firmly to this for some time, without going any further; the question was of too high and far-reaching importance to permit of an easily-built belief in the continuance of life, although it seemed to be demanded by reason. For many years I went as near to success in the very difficult task of holding judgement in suspense as was possible to me. I did not waver, I waited. What else could I do? The condition of the "psychological climate" in the sixties and seventies precluded anything else for me—as I am constituted. It may be favourably represented by John Stuart Mill's "Essay on Immortality," which doubtless few men of the present younger generation have ever seen. The whole essay is worth reading in parallel columns with almost any latter-day utterance on the subject made by a man of something like parallel account with its author. I think that it points out the justification of my suspense, but I will quote only the following paragraph from it:—

"There is, therefore, in science, no evidence against the immortality of the soul but that negative evidence which consists in the absence of evidence in its favour. And even the negative evidence is not so strong as negative evidence often is. In the case of witchcraft, for instance, the fact that there is no proof which will stand examination of its having ever existed, is as conclusive as the most positive evidence of its non-existence would be; for it exists, if it does exist, on this earth, where, if it had existed, the

evidence of fact would certainly have been available to prove it. But it is not so as to the soul's existence after death. That it does not remain on earth and go about visibly, or interfere in the events of life, is proved by the same weight of evidence which disproves witchcraft. But that it does not exist elsewhere, there is absolutely no proof. A very faint, if any, presumption is all that is afforded by its disappearance from the surface of this planet."

Even this short passage is worthy of long discussion—discussion for which I have too small place and inadequate powers. But at least I may point out the curiously interesting character of the illustrative comparison of the belief in immortality with belief in witchcraft. Mill did not live long enough to find serious students attacking the confused mass of psychological and social problems which were then summed up under this latter head. He knew nothing of the evidential facts upon which the science of his day had turned its back, but which the science of our day holds up in full light and supports every day by its observation and experiment. He knew that if ever "witchcraft" had existed it must be still existing, but he did not see the operation of the blind eye in overlooking its existence. Scientific research into hypnotic phenomena, into morbid psychology of many phases, into anthropology, and other cognate matters, has unearthed evidence for a very large number of the facts which were formerly lumped together with fictions, fictions very plausible to those exceptional and uncritical persons who had, and have, experience of the facts, and were once

comprehensively labelled "witchcraft" by them and everybody else.

Something very similar may be said now in regard to the persistence of man's life beyond the last and critical stage of the death which his body dies daily; gradually, up to that final throwing off. Since Mill's time no particle of evidence has been produced to strengthen the negative which he then found insufficient; and to not a few of us there has been just such an unveiling of neglected evidence of the positive kind as has happened with regard to witchcraft. We have ceased to turn the blind eye; we have ceased to be so ultra-respectable in our scientific customs as to shrink from the dust-heaps of superstition, and miss the chance of finding hidden treasures simply because we will not believe that they can exist under such repulsive conditions.

It is an idle speculation, perhaps, but I wonder (or, rather, do not wonder but guess pretty confidently) what Mill, who thought it reasonable to hold judgement in suspense in 1870, would have thought in 1906. He said then that "to any one who feels it conducive either to his satisfaction or to his usefulness to hope for a future state as a possibility, there is no hindrance to his indulging that hope." What would he say now—he, with his willingness to learn, his admirable freedom from prejudice, his great capacity for truth, and his original Platonism of mind?

He would have come to see (with a great part of the thinking world) more clearly than he saw then, the ineptitude of that guess which made

consciousness to be inactive in regard to the body. He would have watched all the new powers of science at work upon the secrets of the universe, and seen triumph after triumph of discovery. He would have observed the developed historical criticism of our time. He would have seen the study of man prosecuted as it had never been prosecuted before, with results undreamt of before. And, as I have said, he would not have found one particle of evidence against a future life added to that which he knew in 1870, rather he would have seen a not inconsiderable array of evidence in its favour. I venture to think that he, at least, would not have scorned this evidence because its beginnings had been raked out of the dust-heap.

There is also another consideration—the question of *values*, and of the conservation of values, which nowadays receives from some of our best thinkers more attention than Mill would have given it. I have alluded to it before as affecting me, but I emphasise it now by means of a voice from the long past (which we name the Wisdom of Solomon), speaking the mind of the man who is without God.

"Our life is short and tedious, and in the death of a man there is no remedy: neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave. For we are born at all adventure: and we shall be hereafter as though we had never been: for the breath in our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark in the moving of our heart: which, being extinguished, our body shall be turned into ashes, and our spirit shall vanish as the soft air, and our name shall be forgotten in time, and no man shall have our works

in remembrance, and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist, that is driven away with the beams of the sun, and overcome with the heat thereof. For our time is a very shadow that passeth away ; and after our end there is no returning : for it is fast sealed, so that no man cometh again. Come on therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present : and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wines and ointments : and let no flower of the spring pass by us : let us crown ourselves with rosebuds, before they be withered : let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness : let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every place : for this is our portion, and our lot is this. . . . Let our strength be the law of justice : for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth."

When we look to the question of values generally, and to the need and the craving for the conservation of the values of personal life in particular ; that is to say, when we begin to set religion in its right place, and see it grounded, as it assuredly is, in the constitution of man, then the problem of immortality takes on a new aspect. How shall the high values of human life be conserved if "our time is a very shadow that passeth away"? And if this be indeed "our portion and our lot," why should *not* our strength be "the law of justice"?

IX

FROM many directions there poured upon me in the closing eighties evidence changing the face of the problem of religion, changing too, of course, my own attitude towards it, and slackening the grip on my desirous heart. But I did not look towards Christianity at first ; I was still prejudiced by the poor work that I had done, and the verdict I had too lightly delivered to myself. I looked rather for some distilled essence, as it were, of all religions, the product of eclecticism, or perhaps of syncretism, which should be purer than all, and should meet the necessities of man in a purer ether than history could show. "God, freedom, immortality," I came to accept as sure and reasonable ; but the institutional religions of the world were muddy pools, from which I should have hard work to draw the pure water of an uncontaminated faith.

I did not start on this new quest unbiased, I had my presuppositions, my demands, conditions. I had kept my book in my pilgrim-sack ; science had scored in me that which could never be erased ; philosophy, too, had taught me to be critical, and had unsealed my eyes to far distances, vistas never to be shut out

again. Assuredly, I had my prepossessions of the compelling reasoning mind. The dry light was not extinguished for me ; but "Intellectus humanus luminis sicci non est," says Bacon, and it was enforced by greater light in which it found, I think, new brilliance, and something of a power of command. Reason speaks only the more plainly as the sceptic's paralysis is healed and his hesitating ceases to confuse. "In contemplation," says Bacon, "if a man begin with certainties, he shall end in doubt, but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties." I had proved this in my experience, so I faced the world's religions, not unencumbered with convictions as I had faced the world's sciences, but with a panoply, offensive and defensive, that was to put to the test every system I could find. I was quite sure of a few things ; that is, I was quite sure that if I was a rational being and the universe was rational—my basal assumptions, if you like—a few things must be as they seemed. Some of them had been given by science, some by philosophy, some by my heart ; they were all there to be reckoned with as making demands upon the religions of mankind ; therefore I started with the cause prejudged to that extent.

It was easy to rule out Buddhism, for the purpose of the moment—that great atheistic and acosmic system of ethics and renunciation ; because I believed in God and in man and in the world. It was easy to rule out the whole deistic division of the theistic religions, although, of course, I had learnt enough from philosophy to recognise that, as Newman says,

"there is something true and divinely-revealed in every religion of the world." I ruled out as philosophically inadequate the division of which Islam is the type. My philosophic presuppositions forbade any "absentee God," any "occasional visitor," any arbitrary, however benevolent, ruling tyrant. "What were a God who only gave the world a push from without, or let it spin round His finger?" Curiously enough, the results of my old superficial but laborious reading caused me to set Christianity, for a considerable time, in this division. Deism had been preached to me in my early days, deism had been attacked in the sixties and seventies, deism had been defended, and deistic I held Christianity to be. This, as it stood, was not unreasonable at first; the odd thing was that I had never discovered, during the years that had since gone by, that Christianity had been misrepresented both to me and by me.

Philosophy had brought me at this time, as Leslie Stephen complains that it must bring all men, to the door of pantheism; my heart urged me through that door; I entered—and found disillusion; yet something of pantheism I must retain, for something in it compelled assent. I went about in search of its corrective and fulfilment, vainly trying to correct and fulfil it for myself.

It would weary my reader, who, as I said before, may have all modern advantages over me, if I were to map out this part of my exploring and tell the tale of all my critical encounters. The main interest for me at this point, and perhaps for him, lies in the manner in which I discovered what I may for the

moment call the element of pantheism in Christianity. I discovered it in the service of Benediction at the Oratory in Brompton Road. I might have included in the catalogue of my shining Epiphany stars that unforgotten afternoon.

I remember vividly the profound emotion with which I saw, at last a great gathering of pilgrims worshipping, as in my queer but honest way I worshipped, and acknowledging—it seemed—as I acknowledged, the oneness of spirit and matter, the immeasurable greatness penetrating and including the very least, the infinite issuing through the finite, the supreme source reflected in the image, God coming to man through the little things being made. I saw all this in a people prostrate, as I was prostrate, before an everyday material thing.

And afterwards I felt more lonely than ever. Here was a multitude at one with me, yet divided from me by a huge dogmatic structure with which I could not away—or so I thought.

Yet the pantheistic religions showed me a fatal want, the lack of place in their philosophy for moral distinctions and for recognition of that which was the foundation of those distinctions, the great truth of self-determining, self-conscious being—*personality*, imperfect yet developing among men, perfect in all its inclusiveness in God.

Mr. Frederic Harrison, in his “Pantheism and Cosmic Emotion,” says that it is

“the original blot on every form of philosophic pantheism when tried as a basis of religion, or the root idea of our lives, that it jumbles up the moral,

the immoral, the non-human, and the anti-human world ; the animated and the inanimate ; cruelty, filth, horror, waste, death ; suffering and victory, sympathy and insensibility."

At the time of which I write I had not seen in their full practical force the objections to pantheism as a valid doctrine, the *pragmatic* objections, which were based on its obliteration of moral distinctions and of the personal distinctions within the wholeness of life ; but I had learnt to see that these objections existed, and that they were very strong for any man whose interests were, at least in some degree, interests of conduct. I had discovered that if I were asked to state the grounds of my dissatisfaction with Absolutism in any form, I should have to say, as Mr. Henry Sturt said the other day : "I can only give the apparently simple and hackneyed, but still fundamental answer, that Absolutism does not accord with the facts."

I had not learnt to see that, in relation to a judgement of value, it must stand condemned, because, in any fair view of man's constitution and powers, it fails to work ; nevertheless, its speculative aspect finally repelled me.

On the other hand, I had considered, without attaining any satisfactory result, that kind of theism which is usually called "Natural Religion"—a kind of religion which has been the source, I think, of more of the despair of religious-minded men than any other, except perhaps Calvinism.

My scientific pursuits made me especially interested in it, and I sought in many directions for

material which would help me to a verdict on its claims.

I remember well, in particular, the anonymous publication of "A Candid Examination of Theism," by "Physicus," who turned out to be Dr. George Romanes. In that book I found one of the most lurid pictures of "nature red in tooth and claw" that I have ever seen. Romanes, as is well known, came to recognise many reasons for toning down the picture he had drawn; but, with all the good will in the world, it cannot be obliterated by him or by any one unless it is to falsify the facts. The constitution and course of nature involve the bloody tooth and claw; the engine of the survival of the fittest is death—eliminating death, which tramples out the weak, even those weak who under other, and only slightly differing, circumstances, might be strong. Against a glacial deluge the mammoth was too weak; and the most loathsome parasite, in a place where it can work ruin and disease, is stronger to survive. Nature, it seems, has neither morals nor pity; she cares only for efficiency. So when "Physicus" makes his candid examination of theism, of *natural* theism, theism gives way for him; and "with the utmost sorrow," so he tells the world, he gives up theism. Years afterwards he set himself in a changed mind to write "A Candid Examination of Religion," of which notes only have come out to us. He did not live to finish it; but many of his notes have the value of parts of an autobiography. We see in them his gradual awakening to awareness of the fact that the whole man must judge this vital question; we watch

his development as he came nearer to using the wholeness of himself. He had neither a very fine mind, I think, nor a very powerful one; he seemed for the most part very much the amateur, and in his treatment of philosophical problems was very much the plain man, although he had more than the plain man's customary equipment of instruction and opportunities. I have seen him at an Aristotelian Society's meeting bewildered by the philosophers' philosophising in just the plain man's way. But this plainness of his makes him no less suitable for my purpose here. As a biologist he saw the distressed earth, in a picture of distress perhaps exaggerated but more or less as all we plain men may see it if we look; and he rejected the "natural" God of it as many of us do, as soon as we look. He came to a better (because a more sane and profitable) state of mind mainly because he found, not only that the other state of mind would not *work*, but that the demand that the values of life should be conserved is a reasonable demand, which is the happy lot of great numbers of us. His somewhat small philosophic capacity is of no account compared with his witness to the needs of man. He stands out also as a witness to the failure of so-called "Natural Religion," and that is the office he fulfils for me at the present moment. The man of good will who looks out seriously on nature, on the panorama of the outer world, and makes a satisfactory theism from it, must indeed have a blind eye and an optimistic temperament. I could not do it; I cannot do it now; nor could Romanes, even when he came to his

better mind. His theism in the end was Christian, which is a very different thing.

The world of nature presents terrible problems, problems that may be evaded for a time, but are again before us as soon as we turn our eyes to seek out seriously the truth of the world.

"The mood of levity," as James says, "may be our anaesthetic. But no!" he goes on, speaking of Carlyle; "something deep down in Teufelsdröckh and in the rest of us tells us that there is a Spirit in things to which we owe allegiance, and for whose sake we must keep up the serious mood. And so the inner fever and discord also are kept up; for nature, taken on her visible surface, reveals no such Spirit. . . .

"Now, I do not hesitate frankly and sincerely to confess to you," he continues to his audience of students, "that this real and genuine discord seems to me to carry with it the inevitable bankruptcy of natural religion naïvely and simply taken. There were times when Leibnitzes with their heads buried in monstrous wigs could compose Theodicies, and when stall-fed officials of an established Church could prove by the valves in the heart, and the round ligaments of the hip-joint, the existence of a 'Moral and Intelligent Contriver of the World.' But those times are past; and we of the nineteenth century, with our evolutionary theories and our mechanical philosophies, already know nature too impartially and too well to worship unreservedly any God of whose character she can be an adequate expression. Truly, all we know of good and duty proceeds from nature: but none the less so all we know of evil. Visible nature is all plasticity and indifference—a moral multiverse, as one might call it, and not a moral universe. To such a harlot we owe no allegiance; with her as a whole we can establish no moral

communion ; and we are free in our dealings with her several parts to obey or destroy, and to follow no law but that of prudence in coming to terms with such of her particular features as will help us to private ends. If there be a Divine Spirit of the universe, nature, such as we know her, cannot possibly be its *ultimate word* to man. Either there is no spirit revealed in nature, or else it is inadequately revealed there ; and (as all the higher religions have assumed) what we call visible nature, or *this world*, must be but a veil and surface-show whose full meaning resides in a supplementary unseen or *other world*.

"I cannot help, therefore, accounting it on the whole a gain (though it may seem for certain poetic constitutions a very sad loss), that the naturalistic superstition, the worship of the God of nature, simply taken as such, should have begun to loosen its hold upon the educated mind. In fact, if I am to express my personal opinion unreservedly, I should say (in spite of its sounding blasphemous at first to certain ears), that the initial step towards getting into healthy, ultimate relations with the universe is the act of rebellion against the idea that such a God exists."

Probably every man who has passed through that act of rebellion and has come out upon the other side will agree with these last words. It is not in "the God of nature, simply taken as such," that any man can legitimately find the God whose very Name is Love. Yet it remains true (as I hold now) that to the God who is Love the sparrows and the hairs of our heads count for everything they can possibly be worth ; and that a better ordered world than this, wherein we ourselves have so much ordering to do

and do our ordering so ill, may well explain both the manner and the method of the one where now it is often hard to see the Spirit in which, nevertheless, we *must* believe because we find it—if we will—working in ourselves.

Of most of this, however, I was still ignorant when I was travelling on pilgrimage in search of a religion that would not outrage my intelligence and wound my heart; but I knew enough to reject natural theism as soon as I saw what it involved. Perhaps some small knowledge of biology helped me to a decision, as much knowledge of it helped Romanes.

Was there anywhere, I asked myself next, a religion making it "possible to escape," as Dr. Edward Caird says, "the opposite absurdities of an Individualism which dissolves the unity of the universe into atoms, and an abstract Monism which leaves no room for any real individuality either in God or in man"? Only one that could do this, and save me from a shattering Scylla and a drowning Charybdis, could bear me to the sunlit sea where heaven and earth might meet, and man and God.

For some time I sought in vain, and that for good reason. I believe now that there is only one religion in which the "opposite absurdities" are escaped, only one religion which is neither pantheistic nor deistic, only one which enshrines the truth of both, not merely fused, reconciled, accommodated, but transcended and brought into new being in a growing harmony.

Christianity is not a ridiculous blend of pantheism or cosmic theism with deism; it is something

different from all, and pantheism adumbrates it in one distortion of its truth, abstract theism or deism in another. It fulfils all ; but it is neither, and not all. I know this now, but I took much time to find it out. I was set on the way to it by another book, for long an occupant of my pilgrim-sack and still now and then packed in it for some special use. This new book was "Lux Mundi" Aubrey Moore first showed me that I might find in the Christian religion a beauty and inclusiveness, even a philosophic, reasonable beauty and inclusiveness, which I could not find elsewhere. His essay on "The Christian Doctrine of God" tore a veil from before my eyes. I can find much fault with it now ; I could find some fault with it then ; but it did a good work in me which has never been undone. I saw that among the people whereof I had found a multitude worshipping with me I might also find rational justification for the manner of their worship. I saw a possible overcoming in the moral sphere of both the all-obliterating tolerance of idealistic pantheism and the intolerable and intolerant rigidity of the realistic deisms. This was not to be by any *via media* for blind men incapable of seeing that in such a manner of escape lay the absurdity of a conjuror's trick ; it was to be rather by a great high road of truth wherein these byways should be lost and yet fulfilled.

I have learnt many things since then, but I still see in "Lux Mundi" my first discovery of Christian doctrinal truth, and of a harmony of opposites in the Christian religion, there and only there. I had

sickened at the easy escape pantheism offered from the ills and problems of a striving, painful world ; I had revolted against the hardness, the crushing injustice towards God and men tolerated in its deistic contrary ; but I had searched for peace in vain, looked in vain for any real cure of the world's wretchedness that should "escape the accusation of 'healing the hurt' of man too 'slightly,' of explaining away the darker aspects of life."

"It is a significant fact," says Dr. Caird, "that no one has ever brought such an accusation against the greatest optimist whom the world has ever seen." Here, in "Lux Mundi," was set before me a picture of this "greatest optimist" and of the faith of His followers, showing them to me as recognising facts in all their inflexibility, facts of human practical experience and facts of the reflective consciousness ; and pointing towards that way of growing harmony which should justify optimism as nowhere else I found it justified.

In the Christian faith the whole existence of nature and man is represented "as connected in one process, which has revealed in the past, is revealing in the present, and will reveal still more in the future, the one spiritual life which flows out from God to the creation, and which flows back to Him again through man, the highest of all the creatures." "Thus"—again I am quoting Caird—"St. Paul combines the idea of the spirituality of God, which was characteristic of monotheism, with the idea of the immanence of God, which was characteristic of pantheism, uniting both in one conception by the aid of the idea of evolution."

Dr. Edward Caird printed the lecture from which these words are taken only in 1893, but I found the gist of them, and more, when I read "Lux Mundi." I discovered then that St. Paul was an evolutionist, and Christianity evolutionary; and I knew before that without evolution all religion was a vain thing. I discovered that my first book, which had begun the unfolding of my soul, had been sorely needed to send Christians back to Christ and His Apostles. I discovered that the current conception of Christianity in the sixties and seventies was so blighting to me, only because it had not recognised the light of the divine reason shining in the men whom Christians opposed. There was good historical cause for this; it is easy to explain it now; but there is no doubt that the advance of so-called "secular" knowledge here, as elsewhere and often, proved a messenger of God to arouse His people to the wonders of a greater religious truth which they possessed and had neglected. There is degeneration, there is arrest, in religion as in natural life. And when I discovered that "Christianity is wide enough to overcome all the divisions of the outward life of mankind, whether natural or spiritual, and to bind them together as members of one great community," I knew that I might pass into a yet larger air than that of philosophy, and find a home beyond the sharp contest of religion with religion and of scheme with scheme, in the place of a great synthesis. Here the natural world, in its ultimate truth and meaning and value, was declared to be spiritual:—"God becomes the God of all men and nations, the God who is revealed in nature and

history alike ; and the whole process of finite existence is viewed as one connected evolution, in which God manifests Himself in and to His creatures, that 'in the fulness of time' He may reconcile all things to Himself."

The dynamical conception of religion had come to match for me the dynamical conception of earthly natural life, bringing with it the all-inclusiveness of a truly divine philosophy, and stirring up in my soul new energy of faith and hope and love.

The unfolding of my soul had been, at least on the intellectual side, so far and in the main, the unfolding of the idea of man. My first book had revealed him to me cast down, numbered among the beasts, a product, it seemed, of nature, and a part of nature—in the narrow sense nature had for me then. I saw him fallen from a great mythological estate on an earth of his dominion, which was lighted by a "greater light" for his day, and a "lesser light" for his night, with "stars also" for mere opulence beyond his use. Then, on the philosopher's way, I had watched him begin to rise again and show himself for me "ni ange ni bête," a point of union, a meeting-place for great and small, for matter and spirit, a bridge of life within creation. Higher still he rose, and my heart rose too as I saw him shaping his world for his own dwelling-place ; forming in his divine power a life and manner of life unto himself, and standing over against God to accept this, to refuse that, to receive or reject even the supreme gift of God Himself within his own heart—love coming to draw forth love. And in the end I saw in him a

point of conjunction, not merely of matter and spirit or of angel and beast, but of God and himself.

The dynamical conception which came to me with Darwin's book had spread over all things, and had been crowned at last. Now there opened out before me an endless view, an endless progress of a Divine Humanity ever reaching, yet never exhausting, a goal within which men assume to themselves step by step that which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive."

My universe had grown, and my religion demanded other worlds and a real Super-nature. I may take a passage from Professor James's essay, "Is Life worth Living," to sum up what I would have said at this point had I been able to say it.

"Religion has meant many things in human history ; but when from now onward I use the word I mean to use it in the super-naturalist sense, as declaring that the so-called order of nature, which constitutes this world's experience, is only one portion of the total universe, and that there stretches beyond this visible world an unseen world of which we now know nothing positive, but in its relation to which the true significance of our present mundane life consists. A man's religious faith (whatever more special items of doctrine it may involve) means for me essentially his faith in the existence of an unseen order of some kind in which the riddles of the natural order may be explained. In the more developed religions the natural world has always been regarded as the mere scaffolding or vestibule of a truer, more eternal world, and affirmed to be a sphere of education, trial, or redemption. In these religions, one

must in some fashion die to the natural life before one can enter into life eternal. The notion that this physical world of wind and water, where the sun rises and the moon sets, is absolutely and ultimately the divinely aimed-at and established thing, is one which we find only in very early religions, such as that of the most primitive Jews. It is this natural religion (primitive still, in spite of the fact that poets and men of science whose good-will exceeds their perspicacity keep publishing it in new editions tuned to our contemporary ears) that . . . has suffered definitive bankruptcy in the opinions of a circle of persons, among whom I must count myself, and who are growing more numerous every day. For such persons the physical order of nature, taken simply as science knows it, cannot be held to reveal any one harmonious spiritual intent. It is mere *weather*, as Chauncey Wright called it, doing and undoing without end."

That the Super-nature, that will supplement and explain this which without it is "mere weather," is itself Nature, I thoroughly believe and believed ; but it lies beyond as well as within ourselves and the superficial film, and as yet it is ours only in part and when in part we choose to use and know. On the superficial film there is blood and carnage, and evil is at war with good ; there is beauty, there is also, if we know anything, its very contrary in repulsiveness of deformity and perversion ; there is no rest, no enduring peace, no unhampered activity. Yet although the world's meaning is incomplete, it must, in spite of everything, have a real meaning even as it stands, a meaning for us as we stand ; a meaning and a worth that will pass on—it cannot be

a mockery. "If this life be not a real fight," says James, "in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will."

Was not St. Paul thinking of this "real fight" when he spoke of our having to "fill up that which is behind in the afflictions" of the great Redeemer?

We have no business to sit down either comfortably or penitentially in this terrible and beautiful world to wait for a better. We have our part to play, a part that is needed and will go on. If the values of life are always conserved—and a belief in this is of the very heart of our religious faith, indeed of all religious faith—the eternal life is ours here, and nothing here is insignificant; everything that we do and think and feel, or leave alone, counts, and counts for ever. The fight is real. The better world includes this. And Christians have always held these things in their treasure-house, although they have sometimes forgotten or refused to bring them forth. In their treasure-house, at last, I found what I sought—these things and more.

X

I FIND in my old note-book these words taken from Pfleiderer's "Philosophy of Religion," which point to what I may call the beginning of my end in that new beginning of a Christian faith.

"From the moment . . . when the first presentation of the God-consciousness, the solution of the riddle of the world, shimmered like the earliest ray of morning light across the dawn of an earthly soul, from that moment 'man' was there—*i.e.* 'the thinker,' *anthropos* was there—*i.e.* 'he who looks upwards.'"

My sun had risen, and I became "he who looks upwards." First outwards, then inwards, and at last upwards, is the way of man, and it was mine.

Comte calls the man-infant's first look upwards the theological stage—as it is—out of which, historically, man grows—as he may. But a larger philosophy than Comte's, and a more penetrating teleology, sees in the man-infant's gaze the promise of that which is to come when the vision of childish eyes shall grow to fulfilment, to a vision blessed indeed of a common truth in God and in himself. "Anthropomorphism"—that word of my reproach in the sixties—is a word

of revelation now. Is there conceivable by man a greater way of his advance towards the greatest than the way which is his own? Is there for him any method of conceiving God, any terms in which he can set forth his conception, more glorious than the method and the terms of a divinely-crowned Humanity? Do "force" and "matter" embrace more of reality than the nature of him who invented them for convenience of his thought and speech? Is mechanism more perfect than the mind that contrives it? Is a world that is built up in action and thought vaster and more awe-inspiring than the builder and thinker? Where shall I find in my experience that which overpasses me, save God, whose most eloquent speech to me is the Word made Flesh?

The Christian religion is the final justification of that critical anthropomorphism to which science and philosophy alike contribute, and beyond which they cannot pass.

"The mind," says Philo, "is an offshoot from the divine and happy soul [of God], an offshoot not separated from Him, for nothing divine can be cut off and disjoined, but only extended."

Therefore man can learn to see God in man, as in a glass darkly, and yet face to face.

For better explanation of the way in which I came to this point I must go back to the beginning of my end, to the time when my discovery of a people worshipping and seeing, in a Christian church, as I, in my measure, could see and worship, I had added the discovery of a reasonable justification for their

doing as they did, a reasonable and therefore illuminating doctrine of theirs concerning God and man and the world of things.

I did not take pains, at first, to set one historically constituted Christian group over against another; I was for some little time at the stage of development when "*on ne comprend pas qu'on se divise pour si peu de chose*" as that which had made groups of the one body. Later, being drawn first by my heart, and then even by my head—once repelled—to the greatest group, to the people with whom I had first found my fellowship of adoration, I thought most about Rome. Again my old note-book gives an indication of my state of mind in an extract from an essay by Dr. Martineau on "The Battle of the Churches." He says :—

"Few even of educated Englishmen have any suspicion of the depth and solidity of the Catholic dogma, its wide and various adaptation to wants ineffaceable from the human heart, its wonderful fusion of the supernatural into the natural life, its vast resources for a powerful hold upon the conscience. We doubt whether any single Reformed Church can present a theory of religion comparable with it in comprehensiveness, in logical coherency, in the well-guarded disposition of its parts. Into this interior view, however, the popular polemics neither give nor have the slightest insight; and hence it is a common error, both to underrate the natural power of the Romish scheme and to mistake the quarter in which it is most likely to be felt. It is not among the ignorant and vulgar, but among the intellectual and imaginative—not by appeals to the senses in worship, but by consistency and subtlety of thought—that in

our days converts will be made to the ancient Church."

I may reckon myself among the intellectual, although of their mediocrity in rank ; and I became, by grace of my Shadowy Companion and of my desirous heart, possessed of new powers of imagination —powers which, let me add here digressively, opened to me in a surprising manner the world of poetry—so it was natural enough that Rome drew me first. But she did not draw me far ; although my heart is drawn to her still, and my intelligence foresees a time when all things, and all men who will, shall be at one with her in a new peace. I found that she, in whom the great dynamic principle had its great exemplifying, was in this present age forgetting what it meant. The same thing was true of the Church native here in England, the Church I saw universal still in its inheritance, yet rightly English ; but I perceived that Rome, in greater power and place, had made for her own limbs fetters of her forgetfulness and her pride, and gates locked against me. I was forced to say, with Renan, "C'est une barre de fer" ; and I went where the inheritance had been abused in a different and less iron-set way. I learnt to discover a Catholic heart and mind, and Catholic treasures, in the English Church ; and I found, despite her unattractive air and look, her confusion and her weakness, that she had a place for me in the organic cohesion of an ancient order which I could not venture to despise, and, on my new principles of respect for Man, did not desire to neglect.

I grew more humble before man, I grew to believe more effectively that—as I had guessed long before—he had not for so many ages been religious man in vain. So I asked him, in a corporate religious capacity, to teach me lessons he had learnt. It was a great step. I did not cease to be critical—due criticism lay within my personal rights and duties—but I put myself to school within a larger religious experience than my own, an experience centred in the event which I recognised as the temporal crown of earthly evolution, and the visible sign and sacrament of its continuance. Many other changes had happened within me, changes without which, I suppose, this change could not have happened; and of these I must say something, but not much—they are for the most part of the *Journal Intime*, which is for my eyes only, and must be guessed from like history elsewhere.

“Christianity, which is the only rational institution,” says Pascal, “does yet admit none for its sons who do not believe by inspiration.”

“Il y a donc, disons nous,” says Gratry, “avec Saint Augustin, une hauteur où la raison s’arrête; c’est sa fin. Mais là, elle se continue en quelque autre chose qui n’est plus elle, comme un fleuve qui se jette dans un autre, ou qui entre dans l’Océan. C’est le point où l’esprit humain se continue dans l’esprit même de Dieu, et s’y soumet. Cette soumission, ou plutôt ce haut degré d’élévation de la raison humaine, soumise à l’esprit même de Dieu, c’est la foi. La foi, telle est la vertu à laquelle s’élève la raison quand elle est parvenue à sa fin.”

But always in reason’s way, and long before this

time, one of my shining stars had pointed out to my reason a new yet ancient way of conjunction—a path of communication between my mind and other minds not mine, yet akin to mine. How should God fail to use this path, I asked myself, when He had come to me by every other way of experience? If mind could communicate with mind "otherwise than through the recognised organs of sense"; if a man might, as I was convinced, convey to another man his feelings and thoughts without words or gestures or hearing or sight; was it reasonable to say that if I were willing and able to receive, God was neither able nor willing to bestow?

So this newest among the sciences, psychology, in one of its newest phases and by means of perhaps its greatest discovery, showed to my rationalising self a place, even in a rationalising scheme, for the pregnant word inspiration and for the verity of a mystical experience.

My will gave place to a recognition of the great experimental fact; and with a larger vision of truth in heart and mind there came to me, as there comes to every man who makes the venture of faith—without which science and philosophy and all works are barren—a new knowledge of the twofold heart and of the straitness of the self-regarding mind—a consciousness of failure, of weakness, and of the ignorance that is sin. "*La foi est, en effet,*" says Pascal, "*la dernière démarche de la raison,*" and it reveals one's own self as nothing else can reveal it here upon earth.

I looked into my heart, and out from it upon the world of men, and I saw that Christianity overpasses

all other religions in more than its doctrine of God. I saw and I knew within myself that man, despite his greatness and because of his greatness, calls for redemption from an evil case, needs a Greater who shall hold out supporting arms and aid him to his right estate. I knew that of all the religions of the world only two offer to man redemption from evil, and that of these one gives it to him as a negation of personal life, and the other—mine—as its fulfilling. How came it that my religion displayed this supreme, embracing doctrine of God—this one fulfilling doctrine of redemption? It came of its possession in heart and mind of the One Mediator between God and Man, the God-Man by whom God is fully expressed under human conditions, and perfect Man is displayed before men. Here was the core, the expanding sphere, of concrete truth, whereby the Christian Church might find, if it would, the manner of including all known truths and destroying, slowly it might be but surely, every lie.

I am the Way, I am the Truth, I am the Life, He said. It was all real, concrete, alive, because He was—because He is—real, concrete, and alive. So He was to redeem me and all the world by dwelling in my disordered self and in all the confused world, ordering and conjoining us, and bringing us in Him to God. It was all real. "Christ for us is Christ in us." I lost my pilgrim's burden, not, like Christian, at the foot of a lonely cross, but before the crib where shepherds and wise men met together and the beasts were stabled; and from whence all men and

beasts can still go forth to bear in man and God that cross, with Him who bore it for the sake of all:

This wonderful concreteness in Christianity is the fulfilment of paganism and of polytheism. There is no abstract love, there is only God the concrete Lover in every heart ; there is no transacted redemption, there is only a Redeemer incarnate in His redeemed, as the concrete hope of their own glory. There is no abstract good, there are only Beings growing to be one in God and with God, who is the concrete Holy One ; there is no abstract evil, there are only Beings lonely and corrupt apart from Him and from all that are His.

"There is something true and divinely revealed in every religion all over the earth," as Newman said ; and there is nothing true, nothing divinely revealed, that is not of the Christ who ever comes, and who is Power and Wisdom and Truth and every other precious thing. The "creed outworn," which set divinities for every abstract name that man has given to his many-faceted ideal, is fulfilled like every other creed in the creed of the Supremely Real. It is better to praise Zeus than an abstract Power, and Athene than Wisdom ; but Zeus and Athene are but shadows cast by the mind of man as in gleams of divine light he felt after a greater Real. So, too, it is with the mythical shadows of an incarnation of God ; they, too, have their fulfilment—they, too, were thrown in divine light and expressed the craving of the heart and mind of man, hungry for his greater self in God, incapable of being satisfied alone.

All these things came to me as I sat learning in

the school of Christian experience. It was worth being a child again to learn such truths, such far-reaching, promising truths of the long story of mankind.

As I look around me now, and back along the course of my pilgrimage, I ask myself many questions concerning this matter of my changed conception of Christianity. I have greatly changed in these last five-and-thirty years; but when I take up now some of the books in which five-and-thirty years ago I found Christianity defended against scientific or popular attack I discover that in some respects I am still the same. If Christianity were what those apologists declared it to be I should be on the other side still. Happily, I can now explain the apologists, which is a sovereign advantage to me; and I can proffer them a hand of brotherhood which—happily for me—they are not here to reject. There is one thing that we shall all do well to bear in mind concerning this conflict as it still goes on; we should bear in mind that it is very much harder for a man to revise his convictions when they are bound up with his whole emotional and practical life than when they are not; and that it is, therefore, much harder for him to correct the intellectual framework of his religious faith than to correct his scientific doctrine. It is also much harder to find a new view of authority, as is necessary now for religious men, than to set something new in the old view, which is all that scientific men ever need to do when revising their science. Consequently there is always even more obscurantism and more resistance to change in theological

than in scientific circles. It is in accordance with the constitution of man that this should be so ; and there is no sense in expecting theological people to be exempt from the defects of their human qualities and the influence of their surroundings and positions, merely because, *ex hypothesi*, they have a glimpse of the profundities of the relation between man and God. A recognition of the truth of true religion, a cognition of the intellectual aspect of the organic and developing state of man in communion and union with God—even some high degree of individual attainment—cannot preclude all ordinary human errors of intellect (although I think it certainly precludes some) ; and even considerable attainment does not preclude all human errors of conduct, although it obviously precludes not a few of them. There is also no reason to suppose that all or even many theological disputants, skilled or unskilled, have progressed far in Christian religion. Add to this the great rarity of skilled theologians, and there seems place for what actually occurred and now occurs of foolish and mischievous controversy. Moreover, the divine revelation in and through the evolutionists is part of the whole revelation which is progressing everywhere, and it was a new possession of heavenly light made human light : for lack of it among theologians great mistakes were made, and are still being made wherever its power and significance are not discerned.

I notice that in popular attacks upon the faith of Christians now it is made a matter of reproach to them that in theological matters they have changed. This shows that the conception of Christianity as

totus teres atque rotundus, which was dominant in my young days, is still dominant among popular critics, who must needs—so it appears—force that out-worn, though not disused, conception upon their adversaries as a condition of controversy, as also, perhaps, providing a vulnerable place for attack. For Christian conceptions to change is according to these adversaries a purposive, although unwilling, shifting of the ground of defence merely in order to escape from the enemy. In this opinion the enemy displays a corrupt scholasticism, in that it regards the essence of Christianity as residing in something fixed. "This new thing," they say, "is not Christianity: Christianity means the historical accuracy of the Mosaic Cosmogony, and an infallible Bible; it means an immoral Atonement by substitution; it pins itself to the Scholastic philosophy; it involves the Roman ecclesiasticism, an arbitrarily inflicted hell and heaven; and this or that of the like. You shift your ground because we compel you to shift it."

"True," we should answer, "you have compelled us, and we are glad to share the light you have passed on. But we too have something to give, light that you need in your turn. Try to find in us something which as yet you have not discerned. We are all illuminated by the same light, and some of us display it in one group of its many rays, some in another. We are all learning."

*How long will it be before Christians speak of this not merely here and there, but as a conviction general among them, a thing of course? How long will it be before on both sides we cast away the

discredited schemes and manner of thinking which belong to that debased scholasticism?

• This *damnosa hereditas* is a subtle curse, and it has penetrated through the whole Christian world, even where the word scholasticism has an evil sound, or is unheard. The most Protestant shares with the Ultramontane this inheritance. The most Protestant would easily, for example, use the very words of Leo XIII. in the encyclical "Providentissimus Deus" with regard to the essence of his religious knowledge and the truth of the Bible. "Libri omnes atque integri . . . cum omnibus suis partibus Spiritu Sancto dictante conscripti sunt," he might say, and often does say. The essence of the divine revelation, therefore, is fixed and unchanging in these particles of the scripture, and I must always find it there, unchanging, unchanged, unchangeable, adequate, complete, now as always, and in all time to come. There is a way of escape for both Christian extremes; but as yet they are not very many who have found it; and it is not the same for both. Here the Catholic, especially if he be *not* an Ultramontane, is at an advantage, or may find an advantage, if he will. He has behind him the sublime facts of his name and family—the Catholic name, the Catholic family; he should be universal, but through time as well as space unless he is to belie his name. The present and the future should count for him with the past. History should be in his blood, but not only *past* history. History means for us now both continuity and development, an unending unity, a unity in difference, as every unity must be to be a unity

at all—a unity that is never complete, but is always being completed.

Religious men must have a theory of theological development if their religion is to have a theology at all—that is, a rational aspect—which will bear even their own criticism once they have escaped from scholasticism, confessed or unconfessed. They must have a theory or doctrine which will make room for the Church to come as well as for the Church that is gone by. The only question is—what theory?

XI

WHEN I try to condense into a phrase—not a ~~very~~ wise thing to do—the errors and confusions in the earlier stages of the conflict between science and religion, those errors and confusions which made my intellectual pilgrimage at first so long-drawn, I find my mind turning to look once more at the notion of “a self-running nature” and “an absentee God.” In a very gross form this notion dominated popular controversy in the sixties and seventies; in at least as gross a form it dominates still the lower intellectual grade into which that controversy has subsided.

“Thus,” says Professor Bowne, “we have to correct the false conception of nature and the natural, which underlies popular thought. Nature is supposed, for the present at least, to run itself, and is set up as a rival of God; so that God is needed only to explain the outstanding facts which as yet have found no natural explanation. With this conception naturalism could not fail to be looked upon as hostile to religion, and it became a synonym for infidelity. And there was a great deal of naturalism of this sort, which promised to dispense with God altogether after a while. This was ‘bald naturalism,’ and it was met by an equally ‘bald’ spiritualism, a thing of portents,

prodigies, and interpositions, spooking about among the laws of nature, breaking one now and then, but having no vital connection with the orderly movement of the world."

I suppose that every man who has wrestled with any mechanical problem, say a disabled motor-car, or has been troubled by an abnormal-looking chemical reaction, will admit that in discovering what he calls the "cause" of his difficulty he feels a satisfaction warming and comforting much the same as the satisfaction of his hunger by food. "It is enough," he says to himself—not in so many words, but in responsive emotion.

Scientific men have been doing this on a large scale during the last half hundred years. Just as the motorist says to himself, "*Now I know what is the matter;*" they have said to themselves, "*Now we know how this or that bit of the world works.*" Problem after problem they have solved and explained to their satisfaction precisely as one of us explains how the car has gone wrong or the chemical experiment produces an apparently unintelligible result. This process is likely to prove intoxicating if suitable criticism is not applied. And suitable criticism has not always been applied. On the contrary, even the men of the other side, who dread instead of enjoying the success that has attended the scientific effort to discover the order and the law of their own rational minds in the welter of phenomena, have too often failed to apply the right criticisms, and have played into the hands of their intoxicated foes. They have granted too much. They have

accepted the scientific men's own account and believed that they were discovering causes—which was true in one sense, but not in the sense in which the word should be used in reference to the efficient causal activity of either man or God. Then they have gone in terror lest there should be left no place for God. They pointed to the flaws and gaps and unexplored crannies in "nature;" they told the scientific man that he had not explained the weather—or life—or the production of biological varieties—or the existence of self-consciousness. But they tacitly or explicitly granted that the other natural problems *had* been explained, and that God should be looked for only in the gaps. The pathos of the "Missing Link," as it appears in theological literature, has not yet received adequate attention.

The theologians of the Missing Link abetted those too-jubilant naturalists who believed that in systematising the phenomenal order they were showing how it was caused and is being caused. They confirmed them in their belief that they were driving God out of the world in proportion to their success in reading in it the same reason which is in ourselves, and which might be expected to be in any world, even in this world, and by theologians.

There are many things at the bottom of all this besides the irrepressible dualism of science; but one of the most important is a confusion of the different meanings of the word "cause." We are now rectifying the consequences of this confusion as fast as we can, and are refining our naturalism. Philosophers, scientific men, and theologians are busy telling us

that the order of natural "law" is in fact our own way of stating our experience, and has no causality in it. "In the causal sense," says Bowne, "it explains nothing, being really only a rule according to which some power beyond it proceeds." It is a manner of operation which in our experience we find intelligible, and which we state as what we call a "law." The scientific man does not talk of a "power beyond phenomena," but Herbert Spencer does in his "Synthetic Philosophy," and he says it is the same as that which in ourselves wells up as consciousness ; but this, of course, is not science. The scientific man, however, assures us now that when he speaks of having found out the "cause" of any event, he only means that he has discovered the invariable pattern of its grouping with other events, and now knows how to describe it in its place in the pattern. Why, then, we ask, all this bother still going on ? We must still ask the question, because the bother is there, although it has taken a new form since the new fashion arose. The debate now is as to whether there is any possibility of discovering real efficient cause at all, whether there is sense in talking of such cause and such causation when we cannot scientifically discover anything but our own perceptions conceived either according to the plan of an automatic machine that runs of itself, or according to a pattern that has no making, unless it is our own. Should we not do better to take the scientific way, and say concerning originative cause and purpose—*ignoramus*? So many scientific men say. And here, upon their complacency, enters philosophy with

unquenched appetite for the real which nothing merely phenomenal can ever fill. It makes demand for cause of the whole affair of things, and talks of meaning and purpose and values. Granting, it says, that there is no longer a scientific question of "law," or "force," or matter" as causes of phenomena —granting that this is "mere" metaphysics in the scientific man's opinion, philosophy must still press it as important to every man who thinks perseveringly and considers the whole of his experience. And there is, indeed, a gain to philosophy in that science now lays no appropriating hand on these conceptions of cause and purpose and meaning and values; or uses the words at all without a *caveat*, except for everyday purposes of language, as it would speak, on occasion, of the rising and setting of the sun. This clears the air in the upper regions of discussion. But down in the intellectual valleys the confusion that reigned in my young days, and showed itself in articles of the greater Reviews, reigns still, breaking out in *The Clarion* into speech. And still theological discussion is made futile in very high places because there are still men in those places who have neither discovered that the clouds have cleared elsewhere, nor appropriated the light that is shining on themselves.

The clouds have cleared, and the issue stands out the more distinct. There is, as I have said, no question of efficient cause at all for the careful scientific man, any more than there is question of purpose or meaning or worth in his field. Such causation has nothing to do with his investigation of

the machine or the pattern of phenomena. It is introduced illicitly, if it is introduced at all, he says (when he speaks as a scientific man); and nothing he can say is more likely to conduce to bringing order out of the chaos of controversy. But there are places, intellectually high or intellectually low, where his words have not made their way. Therefore it is worth while to dwell upon them and upon their meaning.

Let me suppose, by way of illustrating the whole matter, that a scientific man is telling the unlearned the tale of the discovery of the planet Neptune by Adams and Leverrier. He may do it in some such way as this. He begins by recounting how Adams and Leverrier noticed that Uranus did not behave precisely as he should; that, in fact, there were unaccountable perturbations in his movements. From this they inferred that some unknown body must be influencing Uranus and "*causing*" the perturbations in his path. After calculating things out on the basis of these perturbations and the known laws of nature they announced that the perturbing body would be found in a certain place in the heavens; and it was found there as the planet Neptune. The simple hearer may accept the statement that Neptune *caused* Uranus to move in one way when without Neptune he would have moved another way. But the critic would probably begin his inquiry by asking whether if Neptune caused Uranus to do something Uranus did not also cause Neptune to do something. He would then be told that both these planets *cause* each other to do things. Well then—which is cause

and which is effect? The cause is the *pulling* done by both; the effect is the deflection of path of both. Will that do as an explanation? Then the *pulling*, says the critic, is the cause, not the planet? What is the pulling? The force of gravitation, replies the scientific man. Here many critics come to an end of their criticism. The scientific man has invoked force; and there is an end of questioning for many people. Force is a word to conjure with, like matter.

But let us suppose that the scientific man is free from such scientific Aberglaube, and is of a candid and communicative turn. He may then go on to say that he really does not know what gravitation is as a causing force, he only knows that "force as a cause of motion" (as Professor Karl Pearson says) "is exactly on the same footing as a tree-god as cause of growth—both are but names which hide our ignorance of the *why* in the routine of our perceptions." He will say (if he continues in the language of Professor Pearson) that "the law of gravitation is not so much the discovery by Newton of a rule guiding the motion of the planets, as his invention of a method of briefly describing the sequences of sense-impressions, which we call planetary motion." And he will frankly avow that for his part the less he meddles with causes and causation the better for him as a scientific thinker. He will own that when he spoke of Neptune causing perturbations in the path of Uranus, or of gravitation causing them, he was speaking as of the rising and setting sun, in the language of the common people, of poetry, of mythology.

Now, here, I maintain, is one great source of trouble even now : we have these two languages, and it is very hard (if not impossible, at least for long) to keep to the more precise and exact of them. The "self-running machine" of science, or the schematic diagram, is really, as I have said more than once, an economic affair, and very useful as such. Science takes it as it makes it, and does not even inquire what causes "the routine of perceptions" to be as it is, nor why it is there at all. There should be no ground of quarrel here for the theologian, no ground of distress for the religious man. Nor would there be, but for "the absentee God," and the metaphysical speculations of some scientific men (of Haeckel, for example), if only this confusion of language and confusion of thought could be avoided.

For example, again, the scientific man studies the pattern which the processes of growth make for him in a change, let us say, from acorn to oak ; he will have explained it after his manner of explanation when the parts of the pattern or the machine fit satisfactorily and invariably together (so far as he knows) without any gaps or leaps ; and he could do this, if he could do it at all, were the process of growth taking one second or a hundred years. Yet never in either case would he find anywhere the need for an efficient cause, the need, in fact, for the hypothesis of God. His explanation is an explanation of the way in which one bit of the pattern or the machine habitually joins on to another bit—that is all. And when we ask for a deeper—a philosopher's or a religious man's, or even à plain man's—

explanation, he cannot give it. But in this respect the miracle of a second—if it ever occurred—and the ordinary development of many years are precisely alike. If the thing happens he will try to make a pattern of it (more or less) *as it happens*. The character of his method precludes his discovering God by the operation of that method in the investigation of "nature." Therefore he should have no quarrel with the religious man who does discover God, and the religious man need not have a quarrel with him.

This holds good however far he carries his investigation, even when he reaches the "Cosmic Ether" within and beyond acorn and oak, which Haeckel permits us to call by the name of God, if we will. The endless regress of science cannot reach the God of religion; its work is in one order or series, and He, to speak in a figure, is behind and within all orders and series, making and sustaining them. Science is always in a superficies even when dealing with the Cosmic Ether. Why should religious men object, or any men use science as a weapon against religion?

So we correct our naturalism; but it is not enough. We must correct also, and quite as much and as radically, our supernaturalism; and this, I think, is a more difficult task.

XII

SINCE I became acquainted with some of the more profound of Christian doctrines I have never ceased to wonder at, and to regret, the popular ignorance and expert theological neglect of one, particularly, which seems to me in surprising contrast with ordinary opinions as I apprehend them. I mean the doctrine of the *self-limitation* of God. John Stuart Mill said many years ago that "a Being of great but limited power, how or by what limited we cannot even conjecture," is "the Deity whom Natural Religion points to." "Grant," he says, "that creative power was limited by conditions the nature and extent of which are wholly unknown to us, and the goodness and justice of the Creator may be all that the most pious believe." If not, then, emphatically, *not*—he maintained.

The ordinary response of Christians was at the time, and still, I think, would be, that because God is "infinite" He must be unlimited in power as in all else, and that no conception of His limitation can be entertained by a Christian. This, I am glad to know, is sheer nonsense; but until Dr. Gore, some seventeen years ago, showed me that it was, I was

cumbered and hindered like many others by the popular insistence upon it.

"Bene qui dixit ipsum immensum Patrem in Filio mensuratum; mensura enim Patris Filius, quoniam et capit enim," Irenæus said in the second century. And Dr. Gore adds in the nineteenth, when he tells the unlearned of it, "Hardly anything has done more harm in theology than the neglect of this thought in loose ideas of the divine 'infinity.'"

So the "Son" is a measure, a limit, of the "Father." In other words, it is a Christian doctrine that the very "Self" of God contains the principle of limitation. "How or by what limited," God may be, says Mill, "we cannot even conjecture." But it appears that the Christians have conjectured, and that in the fact that they conceive themselves as effective and free, and do not conceive God as an indeterminate Unit but as a differentiated social Unity—a "Trinity in Unity"—they have found a way of rational conjecture. The principle of limitation is, for Christian doctrine, fundamental in God. So I am told. It has, moreover—so I am told—a close association with the conception of Him as Love. Even my lay mind is capable of grasping the fact that, at least in all our experience, Love is not effective love unless there is both lover and loved. I can see that whatever we mean by "infinity" must not allow us to exclude from our conception of Supreme Love at least this, which brings with it a limiting condition. So I welcome the words of Irenæus about the "Father" and the "Son," and I remember with pleasure that other learned Christians have called

the Third within the divine Unity their "mutual Love."

But this is not enough. It was, indeed, for me only a fruitful beginning. Mill's demand for a limited God arose out of his contemplation of

"The heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world ;"

and out of the hopelessness of reconciling its state with the operation of an "infinite" God, who should be both infinitely powerful and infinitely good. I, too, felt this. And afterwards there came added difficulties with regard to personality. If God be infinitely powerful, what is Man? A puppet, no more; and all my new knowledge of him must be blasted with worse than barrenness. The whole human drama is a puppet-show for God, a horrible phantasmagoria for us, who, alas! are puppets that *feel*.

If in Christianity there had really been no room for the conception of the limitation of God I should never have become a Christian. Yet to conceive of a God limited either by an external power, an external compulsion, or by an arbitrary self-will, was to plunge into a sea of troubles, philosophical and religious. The doctrine of Christians is, or rather should be, I venture to think (if they all knew their own affairs), that He is limited, but *self-limited* by nature, will, and purpose; and that with regard to the relation between Him and His worlds in His creative and sustaining activity within them and about them His limitation is imposed upon Himself by Himself because He is

as He is, of the nature that is His. If we call that nature *Love* we are not merely talking poetry. A very beautiful and a very reasonable doctrine, this seems to me. God is, then, for the instructed Christian, both a system and a universal *centre* of limiting differences and conditions, the root and ground of all these differences and conditions being Love.

If, then, the purpose of supreme Love includes the forming and promotion of a Kingdom of Love, a divine City of the Free-to-Love who shall know Him as He is, because—derived and dependent as they are—they are “like Him,” the limitation self-imposed by God must be of very practical importance and significance to us as well as to Him, and our conception of it must affect our whole judgement of Him and of His scheme of things. For me personally the picture thus presented is radiant with light—light upon the problems of this otherwise unintelligible world. I wonder what it would have been to John Stuart Mill. Would he have come to take pleasure, as I take pleasure, in trying to follow out curious ramifications of Christian teaching concerning the “Son,” the “Logos,” the “Word” of God; the uttered Speech which is itself a “limit” within infinity, and in which Mill and I are syllables, or rather sentences, pregnant with meaning and capable of being filled with power of God and meaning of God made to be our own? Would he have come to be interested in the connection that even very slightly instructed Christians have always seen between this world of ours and the “Word” coming to fuller utterance, the growing manifestation of the “Son”

who is *Mensura Patris*? I do not know—he was the son of James Mill—but I am quite sure that if the doctrine of the self-limitation of God were more widely taught, and could by any means be made known to thoughtful objectors to Christianity the effect would surprise many theologians. Its contradictory is just what gives to a large number of objections their chief strength and makes the God whose name is Love appear the author of evil, responsible for the sins and sufferings of the creatures. As Mr. Schiller says, “It is not surprising that no attempt at reconciling the divine goodness with [infinite] divine power has ever been successful; indeed, the only way in which they have ever appeared to be successful was either by covertly limiting the divine power, or by misusing the term ‘goodness’ in some non-human sense.” If we maintain this “unhappy dogma” of infinity, we must think that “God can have no purpose,” he says further on, “and the world cannot be in process. For a purpose and process both imply limitation.... The world becomes an unintelligible freak....” Mr. Schiller is (or rather was when he wrote these words in 1891) under the impression that this “unhappy dogma,” as he understands it, is a Christian dogma; and he points out at considerable length how “the contradictions in the current theological conception of God could be easily removed by omitting the attribute of infinity.” He goes on as follows: “But it must appear astonishing that so simple a solution was not adopted, especially when we consider the history of the conception. The monotheistic

conception of God has existed in the world for nearly three thousand years, and yet it has never been purged of so fatal a contradiction."

I have found throughout my later and more patient life two good (and ancient) rules to be observed with regard to apparent absurdities in the thinking of other people. One is that if I see a very obvious way out of the absurdity it is highly improbable that I am the first man to find it. The other is even more important; it is that wherever large numbers of able and instructed men have held through a considerable length of time opinions which appear to me absurd, it is highly probable that either I do not understand those opinions, or they are at least not absurd, although they may be only partly true.

"*Mensura Patris Filius*," says Irenæus. The Word (or Son) is in the world "as in a body," says Athanasius; and why did nobody think of a limited God? says Mr. Schiller to-day, and said John Stuart Mill yesterday. Whose fault is it that it is still our misfortune that the question can be asked now by men who yet are willing to hear reason if anybody will speak reason to them.

It may be that the common confusion between *limit* and *boundary* is responsible for part of our misfortune: even Herbert Spencer, it seems, was liable to this confusion. I find Mr. Schiller remarking on it in his characteristic manner. "When the stupidity of a sensational novel reaches the *limits* of his endurance, Mr. Spencer does not perceive a black line on the paper. Or again, a process of inference is *limited* by its premises and its conclusion, but

these are neither straight lines nor crooked." If Mr. Spencer fails to make a right distinction so may lesser men ; and I believe they do.

A boundary, in fact, is always a limit, but a limit need not be a boundary ; so if I, by my personal existence, constitute a limit which God, according to His loving nature and purpose, imposes upon Himself in producing and sustaining me ; if I am thus made a condition within which His purpose operates, I do not confine Him within a boundary. He extends in me ; and in Him I live and move and have my being. A boundary implies that there is something on the other side and out of reach ; a limit is a conditioning fact. I think of myself as a conditioning fact constituted by God as such that in His image I may grow to be His likeness, grow to know and love Him as one personal being may know and love another, grow into conjunction with Him as one may be conjoined with another within the bonds of their common life.

The Christian says that he is made in the Image of God, and I know no better way of stating myself as real and yet derived ; but the Image does not exclude God, rather it is a self-made condition of His extension in and with His creatures in a conjunction which preserves the integrity of both.

For this conjunction the Christians have a word—they call it the Incarnation of God ; and they see, or should see, this Incarnation, not as a bare historical fact, but as a process extending through all His created worlds of men and things.

I may dare to say, then, that God fulfils His

nature and His purpose and His will in becoming incarnate and submitting Himself to the conditions of finite existence. He becomes Man, they say, that man may become God. It is a divine aspiration ; and we may picture it as being carried out under conditions which are determined by the divine nature and purpose, and are what they are for. Love's sake. I believe that this is Christian doctrine, and that the God of the Christian faith is taken to be self-limited both in His inner relations and in His outward operation as creating and sustaining the self-determining Image that is to reflect Him more and more.

I see plainly, in virtue of my own experience, that if this is true God's Image is enabled to reflect Him by the very fact that He thus limits Himself, and endows it in its measure and in the secondary and derived state with free possession of His own attributes. There is room in the Christian scheme for real men possessed of power that is become and is always becoming their own, power given royally by God in order that they may use it for purposes that are their own, and thus grow into the splendid freedom of being good. But there would be room in that scheme only for puppets were there no Christian doctrine of the self-limitation of God ; and we should have to set the ultimate responsibility for our own evil into Him were we to call ourselves Christians on such terms and yet be intellectually serious. That is what Calvin did.

"Do you say," writes Dr. Rashdall in the volume of essays called "Personal Idealism ;" "do you say

that all this makes God finite? Be it so, if you will. Everything that is real is in that sense finite. God is certainly limited by all other beings in the Universe, that is to say, by other selves, in so far as He is not those selves. He is not limited, as I hold, by anything which does not ultimately proceed from His own Nature or Will or Power. That power is doubtless limited, and in the frank recognition of this limitation of power lies the only solution of the problem of Evil which does not either destroy the goodness of God or destroy moral distinctions altogether. He is limited by His own eternal, if you like, 'necessary,' nature, a nature which wills eternally the best which that nature has in it to create. The limitation is therefore what theologians have often called a self-limitation: provided only that this limitation must not be regarded as an arbitrary self-limitation, but as arising from the presence of that idea of the best that is eternally present to a will whose potentialities are limited—that idea of the best which to Platonising Fathers and Schoolmen became the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The truth of the world is then neither Monism, in the pantheising sense of the word, nor Pluralism: the world is neither a single Being, nor many co-ordinate and independent Beings, but a One Mind who gives rise to many."

And all these Beings are real and are limits one of another. This, I think, might have contented Mill; and should content many men who now ask for a limited God in order that they may worship Him as holy. It is the only way that I can see; and it is the straight way to the City which hath Foundations.

XIII

"THE Soul in its Original is greatly powerful," says Jacob Böhme, "but its . . . Power is not given to it as a King giveth Favour and Power to a Man, but it consists in a Natural Right, therefore we are Children of the Omnipotence of God, and inherit his Goods in the Omnipotence. True Faith is the Might of God.

"And so a Tree grows out of that Seed of which the Soul feeds, so that it becomes powerful ; and gives its Virtue to the Root of this Tree, whence the Tree grows in the spirit of God even unto the wonders of the Majesty of God, and springs in the Paradise of God.

"There is nothing else in this world, no fire, nor sword, that can touch the soul, or put it to Death, but only the Imagination ; that is its poison."

The poison of the Imagination works, he says, within a man, to transform him into another Image, "the Devil's Ape"—a Mocker, a Pretender. "So thy noble Image is altered according to thy Imagination in the Spirit, and according to thy will, which sticks in covetousness, and so thou loskest God's Image."

Within a man there is the truth of things—this I learnt at last ; within a man, in his constitution, is the apparatus of the revelation of God to him

which will enable him to discern the revelation of God to all, the revelation we call external. There, too, as in many other relations, "*faith in a fact can help create the fact.*" So God within—God there made man—may meet God without, meet God shown before man, and shown in and by man and his world to all men. But that same Imagination, the "Natural Right" and power of the man which enables him to see God and seek God, enables him to see and seek what Böhme calls Mammon, "as in a Darkness," and so to lose sight of God and change his own image, his very Self, so that he cannot find God reflected in it at all.

I could translate this into the language of modern psychology and metaphysics ; but there is no need. It carries its own witness. The men of the "Darkness" are the only true atheists ; they are indeed the only true and not merely professed agnostics of the popular sort. All other men know and enjoy God in their degree. So I see now ; and I see also that all other men are in their degree Christian men—men in whom Christ dwells and works.

"With the same self-evident Certainty as you know that you think, and are alive," says William Law, "you know that there is *Goodness, Benevolence, Meekness, Compassion, Wisdom, Peace, Joy*, etc. Now this is the *self-evident* God, that forces Himself to be known and found and felt in every Man, in the same Certainty of Self-evidence as every Man feels and finds his own Thoughts and Life. And this is the God Whose Being and Providence, thus self-evident in us, call for our Worship and Love and Adoration and Obedience in Him ; And this Worship and Love

and Adoration and Conformity to the Divine Goodness is our *true Belief* in, and *sure Knowledge* of, the self-evident God. And Atheism is not the Denial of a first omnipotent Cause, but is purely and solely nothing else but the disowning, forsaking, and renouncing the Goodness, Virtue, Benevolence, Meekness, etc., of the Divine Nature, that has made itself thus self-evident in us, as the true Object of our Worship, Conformity, Love, and Adoration. This is the *one true God*, or the Deity of Goodness, Virtue, and Love, etc., the Certainty of whose Being and Providence opens itself to you in the self-evident Sensibility of your own Nature; and inspires His Likeness, and Love of His Goodness into you. And this is the only true Knowledge that you can possibly have of God and the Divine Nature, so it is a Knowledge not to be debated, or lessened by any Objections of Reason, but is as self-evident as your own Life. But to find or know God in reality, by any outward Proofs or by anything but by God himself made manifest and self-evident in you, will never be your Cause, either here or hereafter. For neither God, nor Heaven, nor Hell, nor the Devil, nor the World, and the Flesh can be any otherwise knowable in you, or by you, but by their own Existence and Manifestation in you. And all pretended Knowledge of any of these Things, beyond or without this self-evident Sensibility of their Birth within you, is only such Knowledge of them as the blind man hath of that Light that never entered into him."

Knowledge of the truth of man is knowledge of God as He presents, offers, Himself in man. And this is what we are crying out for, we religious men of the twentieth century. "The craving for immediacy," says Mr. Inge, "now takes the form of a

desire to establish the validity of the God-consciousness as a normal part of the healthy inner life." It is a normal part of our life; we have only to turn round upon ourselves and look for it. It is there in ourselves as our principle of order and harmony to be worked out—it is Christ *in* us, the hope of our glory, unmistakable if we will but see.

All the so-called proofs of the existence of God are for me swept away—cosmological, teleological, or ontological, they are not needed, and they are futile too. We are sure of good and truth and love, quite sure; that is the beginning of our living knowledge of God, which needs no more and no less of proof than our knowledge of ourselves. True—I cannot prove my own existence; but have I any need to try? And accepting my own existence I go on to accept human experience in its totality, and I find therein a ground to which I can make appeal against the errors incidental to its development, and the abstractions made from it in the interests of science and practical affairs. The more we know of man, the more we learn of God.

In regard to our estimate of the great changes going on now, this fact is of the first importance. The appeal to the totality of experience, rational, moral, spiritual, has undoubtedly taken on new force with our new knowledge concerning man, and with our new sense of the authoritative claim of his nature and constitution. In the movement of theological development characteristic of our day, in the theories of it, especially in the new Catholic theories of it, this is strongly marked. And it does not minimise or

in any way even diminish the appeal to the divine authority, for in our new notion of revelation we see God always pressing to reveal Himself in and through His men, to whom He ever strives to communicate Himself. And He teaches us, it seems, not only within, as we encounter Him in our depths, but from without. Christ, it has been said, is the supreme Mythos crowning, consummating, fulfilling the Mythos of our world of things.

The word may be misleading, and it seems a pity that we have not another with the best part of its meaning that can be applied where the vehicle of a mystery is fact, instead of fable. To speak of the Myth of Christ is to suggest to some minds an instrument for taking the heart out of history ; but need it be so ? If Plato, for example, has to use fable to set forth for intelligence the mysterious *a priori* elements of man's experience, those elements that in each man shape out a world to match *him*, those elements which are at work in every man, making an organic whole of life that is structurally his own, it does not follow that I need hesitate to use the same word to indicate the operation of God in setting forth the truth of man. I need not hide from myself that God's Myth is as real as that which it reveals, a Myth actually, efficiently, manifest in history and experience but a Myth nevertheless—a living dramatic picture that is no less a picture because it *is*, as well as *tells*, the truth. Plato lays hands on words for his material and shapes them to carry his idea ; God takes real flesh, and blood, and mind, and soul to do the like, to tell and also to body forth His meaning. Both

creations may convey to me as in a picture the inner truth-of life, that I may know what I am ; the one conveying it brokenly, imperfectly, and by a fable ; the other conveying it gradually, but by an unfathomable fulness of reality which is the fulness of the truth of both God and Man, and may become my own truth in my very life—not as in a picture, but as myself.

I confirm in my experience the truth of God's Mythos ; I see it explaining and corroborating me. In an incalculably lower degree I can say the same of the Phædrus and the Vision of Er. In myself I can find God in my flesh, and I can discover myself in Him. "Know thyself" means this discovery. That we can do this, is of course the mystic's peculiar message. The knowledge of man is knowledge of the mystery that is God-Man, a mystery which, like any and every myth that sets it forth, whether in fable or in history, may be known and discerned but can never be fully explained. Once a man is in a certain degree possessed of it the historical Christian Myth may take its supreme place for him in the stability of his own experience.

Thus I, for example, at a time when it seems that every Christian doctrine and all Christian discipline and organisation are being thrown into a common melting-pot, I, being possessed (newly, let us say, for the sake of the discussion) of knowledge of the central mystery, turn to that branch of theological science, that department of scientific commentary, known as Christology. I see it under a new light, in a new aspect, and it is no longer something that an

alien or even a friendly force is trying to impose upon me. I see it, in the first place, as an attempt to state that which happens *in me* (and happens or may happen in every other man) in terms of general application through space and time, and also according to the concepts we call eternity and God, and the other products and discoveries of the religious mind of man. I see it, in the second place, as an attempt to correlate with my experience, and with the experience of the rest, an occurrence in history, the birth, life, and death of one Man, Jesus of Nazareth. Obviously the appeal of theology regarded as an attempt to state or to explain me and my experience, and to correlate me with a certain fact of history and with certain products and discoveries of the human mind, takes in my esteem a position widely apart from that of any appeal which it might make (and often has made) as a self-styled holder of dogmatic truth that was derived *ab extra*, and is proffered me by way of compulsion or persuasion in order that I may receive it on an authority which is not in any real fashion *mine* or shared by me. I scrutinise it; but behind my scrutiny is myself and the divine-human Christ-in-me; and if I reject the appeal I do not reject it as that which has its only value in being a statement of revealed truth, but as an inadequate, too faulty, commentary on facts, which should and will be replaced by a better. There still exists for me, untouched by the failure of any such commentary, my knowledge concerning historical events and concerning the human mind; and I still have the consciousness of the real and active God-man in

me. I go away to seek a better Christology, one in more accurate adjustment with myself and other men and with God's own Myth ; that is all. I do not reject Christ—that would be to reject myself and God—nor do I forsake the Christian body of Christ. I know my own experience and I know about a corporate experience which is borne out by my own, but is wider, greater, than mine. These are the central facts for me ; these carry unshaken primary authority. Then comes history, to be studied and related with experience. Last comes commentary, called theology and dogma, which has secondary and derived authority, and must be continually checked by appeal to that which is central, original, in the community of Man.

For myself I can say that I welcome the process of the melting-pot ; I look to see precious metal issue from it cleansed of scoriæ, of the accretions of the uncareful past, and of much alloy that has been added, often with good will, but sometimes with a very evil will, and always in ignorance of ourselves and God, whether that ignorance were or were not our sin as well.

Now, as always, the Christian religion is standing its trial before the world, and now, as at every successive period of thought, in a fashion that is new. I, for my part, agree with the Abbé Loisy (and so do many better Christians than I) that in so far as it presents itself at the present time “sous les apparences d'une doctrine et d'une discipline opposées au libre essor de l'esprit humain, déjà minées par la science, isolées et isolantes au milieu du monde qui veut

vivre, s'instruire et progresser en tout," its future cannot be assured. In whatever manner its verities are to be presented it must, if it is to keep and increase its hold, admit of accordance with that "libre essor de l'esprit humain" which has its final sanction and its ground of permanence in our Christian faith and hope and love. Our religion must therefore grow with the growth of the human world; and it must express, as religion should, the will-to-live that is of the Soul of Humanity, and our faith that no value in life shall be lost or hidden in the end. It must be clarified with the clarifying of men's concepts, and it must expand with the expansion of their hearts and minds, if it is not to lose all living force. The "libre essor" in the open way of life is, in one manner or in another, the way of God. He, in His Majesty, is treading it with us all; and we are able to see His high purpose and a divine meaning in the fact that the whole modern world demands freedom for the expanding life of mind and soul.

As I look back upon my progress I see it as far more simple and internally consistent than it seemed while I was working through it. I see its course following throughout the clue that Darwin put into my hand. "The Origin of Species" never ceased to influence me, and it has its influence still. I know that I regard with a distrust that has grown into my fibre any guess or statement concerning man which implies fixedness, a statical conception, in place of the dynamical conception that I hold for myself.

I have worked and studied, examined, sifted, made mistakes, assimilated truths, all under the

dominance of this conception, which took possession of my mind nearly half a century ago. "The Origin of Species" was, indeed, the first of my shining stars, and its light has never waned. It is still in my pilgrim-sack, although I do not need to read it any more. There, too, are my other book-stars—the three of which I have spoken; and now I have added a fifth, the Abbé Loisy's "Autour d'un petit livre."

It is to me most welcome. I see in it the promise of necessary changes to come—changes by which a great danger to religion may be averted, the danger that truth-loving and religious-minded men may come to believe that, whereas truth reigns and is welcomed in every other place, within the Christian Church it is rejected because the Christian Faith is bound up with the maintenance of error.

There is not the slightest doubt in my mind, faithful to the fundamental order of the central and universal Church as I deem myself, that great changes are needed and will come. Everywhere men are repelled, or are fortified in their mistakes, by the doctrinal ignorance and errors, official or individual, of Christian people. The application of the best historical and scientific criticism to the Christian case will cast divine light upon its merits, revealing them as they have never been revealed before; and the order will stand out as a permanent principle of growing life, not as an immutable dead thing.

Everywhere we see the march of a great process, which is no mere closing cycle, nor unmeaning flux, but rather a mounting spiral whereby finite men are being endlessly taken into open-eyed conjunction with

the infinite God. It must have been the same, and it is being the same, with the Christian Church; the central exposition of the divine will for the Society of Mankind ; but neither there nor anywhere else has the process been mechanical, or one of mere compulsion from without. There, as everywhere, man the great mover has determined by his selective and directive power the manner of his advance and the structure of his society, the occasions of his minor retrogressive turns and of his individual lapses, and his collective sins and sorrows and perversities. Because man is "*ni ange ni bête*;" because he sums up the lower creation yet is assumed into the Highest, in whose image he came forth; because he is of the earthly, animal, divine, humanity ;—in every manner of his experience, in every step of his way, although he is led by divine power, fortified by it, surrounded by all the aid it can bestow upon a being who must consent to be aided if he is to be aided at all, he makes mistakes. More, he does wrong ; he is not only blind, but he is the *aveugle volontaire* who will not see. The social organism of the Christian Church has been built up in mankind. Men, not yet complete or perfect, interpret to men the Incarnate Truth, the perfect, but not yet complete, God-Man. True it is that men are guided ; the God-Man is ever growing among men in the Spirit of Life who fills the whole round world ; but this guidance is never unconditioned, and its conditions are what they are—manifest before us all, laid barer than before by our new criticism and our new knowledge.

Truth is one, growth is one, however different and

diverse ; there can be no part of our experience and no section of human society to which we cannot apply the principle of human fallibility always manifest in all our works, and of human dignity as it is maintained and held in perpetual honour by God Himself. He thrusts nothing upon us, not even Himself. Therefore we must trace out ourselves in every institution, in every interpretation, in every dogma and doctrine upon earth ; and we must remember that where we are there are our follies, our mistakes, and even our sins. Within and overpassing us, justifying all optimism, is always the God-Man in whom we are growing ; and he seems to me the key, as it were, of the evolutionary process—as much the key to “The Origin of Species” as to the wonderful history, the otherwise inexplicable process and power of His Church of Man. He explains the long tale of man’s mythopœic faculty ; He fulfils the cravings of paganism, pantheism, deism, even atheism ; He, the most Real, is the dramatic Purpose and the moving Idea of life.

To me, “The Origin” would be a lock without a key but for this, which promises that the great evolutionary principle shall not be broken off, cut short irrationally, either in the individual man at death, or in the race when our transitory earth has passed away, as earths do pass away, into a condition under which life as we know it cannot exist. And I should think “The Origin” a broken fragment if I could not see that when it shows how man sums up in himself the stuff and story of earth and earthly life it is but pointing to a larger summing-up beyond,

a summing-up of which philosophy and psychology have given me glimpses, but which only the God-Man in His further operation can possibly complete. Is it philosophic prejudice on my part that makes me believe so ardently in the organic oneness of our diversity of life, and in a divine humanity as well as a human animal? It may be so, but if there be a living God He must be one with man, or He is no God for man. Is there anywhere, except in the Christian order, a religious way of seeing all life one and yet preserving the true, reasonable life of each? Is there anywhere, except in the Christian order, a religious way of seeing God and Man as one and yet preserving all the values of the self-conscious, self-determining life of both?

I have found no other order of religious thought in which these great demands are met, and so I find myself more at home with this—the Christian order, philosophy, scheme of doctrine and fact—than I have ever found myself elsewhere. It is a great deal, but it is not enough, neither is it all. Christianity is more than an order of religious thought, a philosophy or a scheme; it is emphatically a manner of life. It has to do with all relations in life, with the whole of our experience; and in this respect I had to discover it, as it were, in the latter part of my pilgrimage. I had to make the great discovery that all religion is either personal experience and experiment or a matter of very small account; and that the Christian religion, because it deals with the fullest experience, cannot be estimated except by the man who is experimentally possessed by it, who is

penetrated by it through and through, in "body, soul, and spirit," in mind and heart.

I hear men say that the ethics of Christianity—in the Sermon on the Mount, for example—sum up the ethical wisdom of ages; even men of the world say it, and when they add that no State and no Government could exist on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, they are setting State and Government in low place, not on high. They may say that this ethical doctrine is not original in this or that particular, that some of it may be found in Lao-Tse, or in Plato, or here or there; but the most discerning among them see it crowning the general growth of ethical wisdom as Christ crowns the general growth of human life, inclusively and by harmony and fulness and transcendent wholeness, not by unrelated anomaly. No Christian need ask for higher praise of the code of morals for practical life which, as a whole, is the unique possession of the Christian body, and in its parts is rooted in the consciousness and experience of that world of humanity which is filled—so Christians believe—by the assisting Spirit.

Even this is not enough, nor is it all. The more exalted the code of morals, the more inclusive and searching, the greater and the more inexorable its demands, the farther out of our reach is its ideal set. "O wretched man that I am!" If this be my calling and duty, and these my weaknesses and sinful appetites, let me eat and drink and die, for I have no power to attain. Power—that is the great practical matter for us men, once our faces are set

towards the light ; and in the life in Christ the way of power is marked out. Everywhere, all over the world, in its darkest places, as a man follows the light he sees, the power comes and more light comes, and power grows anew, divine power flowing in upon him and through him, whether he knows it or not. But in the Christian faith we are given an open vision of the way of power, as well as of the light and truth of men ; open-eyed we may yield to Christ being made Man in us—the Christ who ever comes to enlarge the realm of His incarnation ; and we may possess and wield His power as our own, reason giving consent, heart warmed by the vision and the presence of Him who reigns. In this, too, Christianity stands at the centre of things and fulfils and completes them all. Experience everywhere shows power coming in support of the effort to follow any gleam of the light of reason and conscience ; but the clear way of it is best displayed to our reason and sight where the God-Man is most clearly known.

So in order, in law, and in power I find the Christian faith at the centre of things expanding to include all else ; and I find throughout the world, indwelt as it assuredly is by the same Spirit that indwells the Church of Christ, prophecy, yearning, broken lights, anticipations, hopes and faith, meeting with fulfilment there, and bringing thither new interpretation and the stimulus of peculiar need.

I have said that although I am no longer agnostic in the popular sense I am in another sense agnostic still. This is because I hold that God overpasses all things, and that our knowledge of Him and of His

Kingdom within us, while always progressing, can never be complete. Therefore I hold also that the pilgrimage of man will go on even when it has brought him to the open Vision of the Blessed, and when every step in it is new fulness of joy.

THE END

